THE

MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Dr. Henson and the Group Movement.

In his charge recently delivered at his Third Quadrennial Visitation of his Diocese, the Bishop of Durham devotes the greater part to an Examination and Criticism of the Group Movement.[1]

It is almost needless to remark at the outset that this document is marked by the Bishop's characteristic lucidity, dialectical acumen, and rhetorical richness. The Bishop strives to be scrupulously just, but it is no easy task, for the barrister for the prosecution, to sit in the seat of the judge. He brings three serious charges against the Groups. The first is that the Group Movement

> 'ignores the demands of the intellect in this high matter of religion. There *are* grave intellectual difficulties which attach to the acceptance of Christianity, and these must be frankly faced by every presentation of Christianity which can gain, and succeed in holding, the acceptance of thoughtful and self-respecting men. Among the Groupist leaders there are men of recognized intellectual distinction, who cannot be ignorant of these difficulties, and who might well be thought specially qualified to discuss them with knowledge and wisdom. Yet they are simply ignored in the Groupist literature, or referred to with a kind of cheerful contempt as if they were properly irrelevant to serious religion. This characteristic of Groupism is particularly regrettable, since its most conspicuous scene of activity lies in the universities, where every circumstance emphasizes the intellectual claim. No serious Christian, indeed, will doubt that the appeal of religion finds response at deeper

[1] *The Oxford Groups* (The whole Episcopal Charge), by H. H. Henson (5/-) :
The Group Movement (First Part of the Charge), by H. H. Henson (3/6) ; Oxford University Press, 1933.

> levels of experience than those on which intellectual debate commonly proceeds, and that the certitudes of genuine discipleship are, in a true sense, independent of critical and philosophic theories. Academics, of all men, have need to remember the disconcerting words of the Saviour, "*except ye become as little children ye cannot enter the kingdom.*" Nor will any student of Christian history question the spiritual irrelevance of theological acuteness and knowledge . . . Nevertheless, Christianity claims to be true, and to carry redemptive grace to manhood in its completeness. If the Religion of the Incarnation is to justify its theory it must satisfy the requirements of the educated intellect, as well as bring peace to the troubled conscience, satisfaction to the aspiration of the spirit, and guidance in the various perplexities of secular life. The very core of fanaticism is its indifference to the things of the mind.'

All this is profoundly true, and there is no doubt that the revolt against intellectualism in religion is an important factor in the Group Movement. It is this which accounts for its securing a foothold in the Universities and a following among young people of the educated classes. The don, in the eyes of academic youth, is an unattractive example of the dryness and dulness, the precision and meticulousness, the lack of imagination and emotion, the hesitancy and caution, the intellectual hardness and laboriousness which are so loathsome to youthful enthusiasm, sentimentality and self-indulgence. But this is not the whole story. There are a number of young men and women who admire the don and imitate him in their intellectual work, who yet feel that his tone and temper, his methods and his limitations, must not be allowed to prevail in the things of the spirit. Their attitude towards erudition in religion is that of the man who said to the great pulpit orator, Dr. South, 'Doctor, God has no need of your learning,' to whom the Doctor, possibly a little nettled, replied, 'My good man, He has no more need of my learning than He has of your ignorance.'

The heroism which Browning celebrated in the Grammarian's Funeral and the negative courage of the man who with every inducement, except the necessary proof, to say, 'I am convinced,' but who will not say it, does not appeal, in a religious leader, to young men and young women seeking spiritual experience and joyous liberation from sin and uncertainty. His dusty answers can be no substitute for the Water of Life, and his cautious intellectualism must not be allowed to check the ardour of the Adventure of Faith.

No doubt, some of the Groupists are carrying their anti-intellectualism in religion much too far. But then a number of them are quite young, and less than half educated, and there is always the swing of life's pendulum to be relied on to adjust the exaggeration. History in Oxford is once again repeating itself. Half a century ago clever young men in Balliol began, Nicodemus-like, to creep along after dark to Pusey House to consult Mr. Gore about spiritual things. It was then that the Anglo-Catholics got their innings, but now it is the turn of the Evangelicals. We must look for these periodic revolts on the part of the young against intellectualism in religion and account their gain greater than their loss, if they secure communion with God. After all it is not by the study of books of Christian evidence, ecclesiastical history, dogmatic controversy, or even the volumes of commentators on Holy Writ which will provide the experience of communion with God and the moral strength to triumph over weakness and vice. Such studies are as ineffective as is asceticism, as Martin Luther realized when, ascending on his knees Pilate's stairs at Rome, he heard the words ringing in his ears, 'The just shall live by faith.'

There is truth in the Pauline *dictum*, 'Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned,' and many members of the Groups have realized this in their own experience. Their mistake in some cases seems to be in supposing that Divine Inspiration makes use of planchette methods, or that of the Virgilian lots, instead of operating through man's rational, moral and spiritual consciousness at their highest. It is not by making the mind a blank that we shall best hear the still small Voice as Dr. Lightfoot has admirably shewn, in comparing the pagan Delphic conception of inspiration with that of the Christian Church.[2]

Dr. Henson's Second Criticism of the Groups.

The second charge that Dr. Henson brings against the Groups is that 'The Movement is too closely bound to the moods and claims of Adolescence.' This also is no doubt true, but we have learnt, in this age, the truth of the axiom, 'Youth must speak to youth.' The Victorians did not understand that,

[2] See his *Introduction to the Epistle to the Philippians.*

and hence the acute reactions of children against their elders which ensued. The Victorian saying, 'Young men think old men are fools: but old men know that young men are,' has now become, 'Old men think young men are fools: but young men know that old men are,' as the result of the prevalence of the evolutionary view of life and the follies that produced the Great War.

Dr. Henson is keenly appreciative of many manifestations of the Spirit of Youth in the Groups, as the following quotation indicates:

> '"Sharing" commends itself easily to the candour and lack of reserve which are noble traits of Youth, and the thorough-going, "absolute" character of Groupist Christianity appeals powerfully to the young man's generous hatred of whatever is tortuous, or timid, or merely expedient, or unworthily compromising. There is indeed a winning attractiveness about this almost reckless enthusiasm of response. It brings back to mind the most heroic traditions of Christianity. We have much to learn from it.'

Its self-assurance, its uproariousness, its jollity, its superficiality, irritate the Bishop. He remarks that it is no compliment to say of any man that 'he has never grown up.' This is true, but it is a compliment to say of him, 'he has never grown old.'

Each age has its own form of religion, and it is the strength of Hinduism, as Max Müller pointed out, that in its religious system it recognizes and provides for this fact; but it requires much tolerance, patience, perception and sweetness of nature in the individual to act in accordance with this principle, particularly as religion is naturally the least tolerant of all the passions.

Dr. Henson's Third Criticism of the Groups.

The third charge which Dr. Henson brings against the Groups Movement is its 'meagre' 'conception of Christianity.' It sees Christianity too much as conversion and propaganda.

This of course is natural enough. The members of the Groups know what conversion has meant to them, as all the 'twice born' do. And they ardently desire to induce others to share in their experience. We may choose to smile at their methods: they are not so subtle as those of the Jesuits nor so dramatic as those of the Franciscans or the Salvation Army, but

what is required of methods is that they should be effective, and judging by the alarm which they are creating in episcopal circles, they are effective.

A STARTLING ANNOUNCEMENT—'THE LORD, MY BOY.'

Dr. Henson appears to have been 'startled and offended,' perturbed and alarmed (we use his own phrases) by receiving a Group invitation in the name of the Holy Spirit to attend a House Party.

This seems to us too reminiscent of Primitive Christianity and many of its subsequent manifestations to give any cause for those feelings. It was the First Council of the Christian Church which prefaced its decrees with the words, 'It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us' (*Acts* xv, 28).

Dr. Henson's animadversions on this feature of Groupism recall the interview of his famous predecessor Bishop Butler with John Wesley, when the Bishop said to that notable evangelist:

> 'To pretend to particular gifts of the Holy Ghost seems to me a horrid thing — a very horrid thing.'

And the Rev. John Wesley, a Fellow of Lincoln College, and so the famous predecessor of the Rev. Geoffrey Allen, stoutly replied:

> 'My Lord, I pretend to no gifts of the Holy Ghost but such as are vouchsafed to all faithful Christians in the Scriptures.'

We have to allow Christians to make these claims, and as we are Christians ourselves to listen to their claims with respect, that is, if we really believe in the inspiration both of the Christian community and of the Christian individual. Should we criticize their claim, it will not be at this stage, but only when we find that their claim is not justified by their subsequent conduct. 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' said Christ. 'Let both grow together until the Harvest' was His advice, and when we see, which we have not yet seen, that lives are changed for the worse and not for the better in the Groups, we shall feel compelled, not simply to criticize, but even to contradict and condemn their claim to inspiration.

It must be said that in his criticism on this point we regard Dr. Henson's action as premature and even prejudiced. Our

fellow-Christians, the Quakers, made the same claim as the Groupists, and have made it for 250 years past, but though at first they were condemned and cruelly persecuted on account of it, yet no responsible Christian leader condemns them to-day, because on the whole, the character and conduct of the Quaker Communion has justified and does justify their claim.

The Self-assurance of the Groupists.

The self-assurance and the seeming claims to spiritual authority based upon the possession of personal inspiration are of course not easy to view sympathetically when voiced by men of very limited attainments and experience, particularly when they pour contempt upon persons and institutions which many regard as worthy of reverence. But this is quite characteristic of prophetic Christianity, and there are many instances of it in Christian history. It was the Sanhedrin, which was first astonished at 'the boldness of Peter and John, perceiving that they were unlearned and ignorant men' (*Acts* iv, 18).

It is annoying when ignorant men assume such airs, but religious earnestness is their justification, and this is the justification of the Groups. Of course earnestness, like sincerity, does not make ignorance wisdom, nor the imaginings of men the Gospel of God, but we may hope that such earnestness and sincerity will in time promote truer views and wider sympathies.

No place for the Groups within the Church.

Dr. Henson's conclusion expressed in the following passage carries less weight with us than anything else he has written about the Groups:

> 'I do not think that the Groupist movement can be brought into working harmony with the Church of England. That movement expresses a conception of Christ's religion which cannot be accommodated to the scheme of historic Christianity as the Church understands it. It is too obviously indifferent to the intellectual difficulties which confront the modern believer and which must be honestly faced and surmounted if the Christian religion is to be intelligent and self-respecting. Its interdenominational character conflicts with the Creed, and ignores the Sacraments. Groupism must run its course on its own lines.'

The Bishop's conviction that the Group Movement cannot be brought into working harmony with the Church of England

seems to us to shew as little understanding of the real nature of the Church of England as it does of the powers of growth and adjustment of a very young Movement. If the Church of England cannot find a place for the Groups within its Church life, that is because the Church of England is being increasingly dominated by a rigid sacerdotalism and a narrow sacramentalism. We recognize to-day that, had the Church authorities in the much despised eighteenth century shewn more understanding sympathy and practical co-operation in the case of the Methodists, we might never have had a Methodist schism. The ever-memorable John Hales laid down the principle 'that not he who separates but he who causes the separation is the real schismatic.' Such statements as that the Group Movement cannot 'be brought into working harmony with the Church of England,' and 'that movement expresses a conception of Christ's religion which cannot be accommodated to the scheme of Historic Christianity as the Church understands it,' and 'that its interdenominational character conflicts with the Creed, and ignores the Sacraments,' seem to us to have, we deeply regret to say, a very schismatical tone.

We know that bishops feel called upon to make pronouncements, many of them, as Church history shews, as premature as they were fallible, on new movements arising within the Christian Church. We realize also they feel impelled to do so as the hereditary guardians of the traditional faith, but in view of the effect produced by the majority of such pronouncements we cannot feel that they are justified. How often would the Church, and not least the Church of England, have gained—as Mr. Hardwick points out in his recent life of Samuel Wilberforce—if her prelates had, in the presence of new movements and new doctrines, shewn a wise reserve, and even though themselves silver-tongued, have remembered that 'silence is golden.' The advice given by Gamaliel has lost none of its weight in the course of the Christian ages:

> 'And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it: lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.'
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> *Acts* v, 38, 39.

THE MODERNIST MOUSE AND THE TRADITIONALIST LION.

Aesop's fable of the lion and the mouse has been fulfilled many times since it was written. It is now being fulfilled again. The lion in this case is traditionalist Christianity. The net in which it is entrapped consists of the dogmatic formularies and ecclesiastical regulations woven in the course of the ages by Church Councils, Papal Decretals and popular superstitions.

The liberating mouse is the spirit of Modernism, which is quietly and inconspicuously severing the strands which restrict the freedom of its entangled friend. Evidence of disentanglement are manifest on every side to-day and in the most unexpected quarters. But our parallel fails at one point: it is no single Modernist mouse but a host, as vast as that which swam the Rhine and consumed Archbishop Hatto in his Mouse Tower.

An admirable summary of this process within Anglo-Catholicism is presented by the Revs. Wilfred Knox and Alec Vidler in their recent book, *The Development of Modern Catholicism*,[1] in which the authors arrive at the conclusion that the task imposed upon the Anglican Communion 'of adjusting theology to the needs of the time' demands that the spirit which prompts this undertaking should have as its fundamental conviction

> 'the full confidence that no new development of knowledge could in the end prove inconsistent with the Christian faith' (Introduction, p. viii).

This has been the main contention of the Modernist School in the English Church, and constitutes one of the fundamental principles of the Modern Churchmen's Union, founded, we may observe, in 1898. Our five and thirty years' toil has not been in vain, though we are far from taking all the credit to ourselves for this conversion to Modernism.

Our ably-edited contemporary, the *Church Times*, is plainly resolved, without calling itself Modernist, to become as modernist as it can. Individuals are bound to outstrip institutions in a race of this kind, and so the *Church Times* has not been able in this Anglo-Catholic *sauve qui peut* to go as far, or as fast, as some of the more courageous Anglo-Catholic leaders. A good example, however, of the modernizing efforts of the *Church Times* in Christian theology may be studied in a leading article

[1] Published by Philip Allan, 1933.

of its issue of March 3rd, entitled 'The Cross of Christ.' The writer of the article first states the traditionalist view of the Atonement and rejects it. He then states the modernist view of the Atonement and rejects it. Having walked up both sides of the street, he then takes his stand in the middle of it within the charmed circle of the vicarious penitence theory of the late Canon Moberly and seeks from that point to direct the traffic of doctrinal theory along the Via Dolorosa. Such sentences as the following will delight our readers (p. 257):

> 'Even in this present century there are people who think that, according to the Church, the death of Christ was a judicial penalty for human transgression inflicted by the divine justice. The penalties incurred by the guilty were allowed to fall on the Innocent. Justice was thereby satisfied and man set free. It is painfully true that in the popular preaching of the past, and also in books about redemption, such crude theories have been given about the Passion. But it would be an entire mistake to imagine that the Church has ever been committed to them. And it is questionable whether a theory so crude as that just mentioned is taught by any community of Christians anywhere to-day.
>
> It is certainly no wonder that such a theory is rejected. The wonder is that anything like it could ever have been held. It is obviously inconsistent with the Christian doctrine of the divine character. It implies a contradiction between the Father as all Justice and the Son as all Love. Those who imagine this caricature to be the doctrine of the Church are rightly constrained by their moral sense to reject it.'

Our Anglican predecessors, ranging from Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury to Dr. Pusey of Christ Church, would feel considerable objection to the summary way in which the expiatory view of the Atonement is thus jettisoned: but providing the expiatory view is definitely got overboard, and not allowed to creep in again through a port-hole, we care not how summary the manner in which it is disposed of.

The *Church Times* of February 24th contained an interesting article on 'Modernism and the Young' by Dean Underhill, which opens with the words:

> '"I am afraid I am a Modernist," is a phrase fairly often on the lips of the Anglican clergy of to-day: the "I am afraid," when addressed to myself, appears to be an apology or a concession to my sensitive feelings, which may be shocked by such dreadful plain speaking. I generally make answer to the effect that I suppose most intelligent persons to-day are modernists.'

Dean Underhill is kind enough to confess in the same article that he takes and reads each month the *Modern Churchman*, and often finds himself in agreement with the intellectual posi-

tion of the writers. He feels, however, that Modernism lacks converting power—a very singular conclusion in his own case. Another complaint which he has against Modernism is that it is somewhat out of date. He writes :

> 'The fact is that the young have for the most part got through Modernism, and are out on the other side, asking vigorously for something more vital. I am thinking more particularly of those who have been as boys and girls at a public school, and are now either at the University or starting in professional life. These people have been brought up religiously on Modernist lines; the masters or mistresses who taught them will have taken for granted the criticism of the Old and New Testaments, and presented to their pupils a Christianity based on such criticism. Modernism is no new and startling Gospel for people beginning life to-day. In many instances it is the only sort of religion of which they have knowledge.'

Young people, Dean Underhill says, want to get direct to God in prayer and life. The kind of religious teaching which attracts them is, he asserts, essentially unintellectualist, but very simple and sincere. We have always felt that one of the great tasks of Modernism, but an essentially intellectual task, was to rid the Christian message of its dogmatic intellectualist impedimenta, and it would seem from Dean Underhill's testimony that our efforts have not been in vain. We have the assurance of Dean Underhill that 'That battle is won.' Nevertheless we are not so complacent in the presence of these compliments as to feel convinced that the task of the Modernist mouse in liberating the traditionalist lion is completed.

Two Lay Voices.

The religion of the normal English layman is probably best summed up in the words of the prophet Micah :

> 'What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with thy God?'

or in the words of James, the Apostle of the Lord :

> 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world.'

In short, his religion is essentially reverent and philanthropic, undogmatic and non-sectarian.

Two admirable expositions of this lay religion have recently been reported in the Press. Lord Dawson of Penn in a speech following his installation as a Counsellor in Liverpool Cathedral spoke as follows :

'The order of Counsellors in this Cathedral — men gathered from diverse walks of knowledge and activity — bears witness to the comprehensiveness of the English Church. You do not inquire whether those you receive into your brotherhood subscribe to the Articles of your creed: rather do you accept all disciples of truth as a way of fulfilling God's purpose. To-day you extend that fellowship to the profession of medicine.

'Viewed in its completeness this profession has a wider range than perhaps any other calling. Its knowledge is based on natural history and in increasing measure on exact science.

'Further we need ideals of service, without which our practice would be as "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal" — on the one hand intuition and charity to perceive and understand and on the other strength to guide and sustain. It is here our work has contact with religion — not in its beliefs, but in its care for the individual soul and the way of living.

'The disciples of medicine are thus concerned with two parallel but different kinds of knowledge. Between these forms there should be contact and tolerance, but not compromise, which though helpful in the world of action is out of place in the world of thought. To the profession of medicine belongs the narrow road of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. The magical and miraculous are the broad road which leadeth to destruction.

'It is a natural sequence to pass to the consideration of the relations between religion and science.

'Religion and science represent two different aspects of experience. Religion belongs to an inner world; it rests upon first experience and later conviction; its concern is life in its fullness. Science belongs to the outer world of the senses and the intellect, it rests upon external observation and later objective corroboration. But life has to be lived, not only thought about, and through life run these different but equally indispensable threads of reality — the experience of the outer world which makes life possible and the inward conviction which makes it strong.

'And what of the world in which these forces move and have their being? Look in what direction we will, there is the unrest belonging to rapid change. The growth of mechanical invention and the changes in industry concentrate attention on material civilization. The advances of science are so extending that, though enlarging the ambit and worth of life, they disturb established habits of thought and bring perplexity to the mind of man.

'Comprehensiveness, which began as an intention in the early Prayer Book "to keep the mean between the two extremes" of Catholicism and Protestantism, is in these days of a larger world a soil favourable to progressive thought, and should prevent unconsidered rejection of new ideas and methods of living which need guidance rather than rebuke. The essence of life is movement.

'It can be truly said that in the realm of thought materialism does not hold sway. On the other hand, in the realm of dogmatic belief there are noteworthy changes, and also in those habits of observance and worship, which in the minds of our forefathers were naturally, though none the less arbitrarily, regarded as essential ingredients of religious life. For a large and increasing body of Protestant people dogma has less appeal, it fails to stir, and some it even estranges. Religion is for

them more rooted in experience and less in belief. Is there not as a result such a disparity between traditional forms of expression and actual convictions as to either jar or numb sensibility? Attenuated belief cannot activate the spiritual life.

'It cannot be justly said that the people of to-day, notwithstanding their aloofness from observance, are not religious, though perhaps they need a firmer acceptance of the fact that the way of life for all must be "no cross, no crown." The manifold contacts with the ranks of the people in my hospital life and in the War, impel me to speak humble and admiring tribute to that faith which gives them trust, to that courage which gives patience, that kindness which lets not the left hand know what the right hand doeth. Though scant of form and expression, surely here is godliness.

'Judged by the Christian virtues, assessed by the Sermon on the Mount, they hold their own with preceding generations of stricter belief and narrower tolerance. It is values which are altering. It may be they are feeling their way back to the Gospels with their universal appeal and absence of set forms.

'Is it not a fact that this large body of religious feelings exists and is half-consciously searching for expression and shelter? Is it not in the power of the Church of England with its tradition of comprehensiveness to enfold it?'

Dr. Cyril Norwood, Headmaster of Harrow, addressing a meeting at the Church House, Westminster, on March 14th, opened his speech with two quotations, one from the Cappadocian Gregory:

'I avoid every assembly of bishops, for I have never seen one which led to any good results':

and the other from Lord Hugh Cecil:

'There seems no ground, either in Scripture or in the customs of the Catholic Church in all ages, to shut out the laity from the functions of criticism and advice of the bishops and clergy.'

We give from the *Guardian* of March 24th extracts from Dr. Norwood's speech:

'The contribution that I hope to make this evening is to state as clearly as I can what is in the mind of a layman who is a loyal member of the Church of England but not at all anxious to attach to himself any party label. In that particular characteristic, at any rate, I can claim to be representative of a very large number. At the outset I ought to define my position. Our Church is called the Church of England, and that to me means much. I wish always to think of it as the Church of England, and not by any other title. It is established, and the distinctive mark of its relation to the State is the Royal Supremacy. To me, that means not only in secular matters but also in spiritual there is a corporate conscience embodied in the Sovereign, to which appeal can be made as the final court. It is not the business of that court to put pressure upon conscience, or to prosecute, or to define, or to formulate doctrine; but it is its business to interpret law. This system has now worked for a good many generations, and, on the whole, it has been proved to be reasonable and to work well; and, as a layman, I do not think that any other system would enable the Church

to remain the National Church. If this seems to be Erastian, I cannot help it. There are certain people to-day who think that when they have called you Erastian they have put you to silence. I do not mean by Erastian that laymen have any right to interfere with the clergy, to meddle with things spiritual or the ministry of the Sacraments. What I do mean is that the Church, if it is to retain its hold on the nation, must try to be nothing less than the nation on its spiritual side, and, therefore, subject to law. And this I believe to be a profound conviction—perhaps I might more accurately say a profound instinct—in relation to this matter of the English nation as a whole.

'There are to me three great schools of thought whose worth has been abundantly proved by their fruits, which should continue to enrich in unity the witness of our National Church . . . There ought to be room within our Church for all that life of ordered devotion and sacramental worship which is distinctive of Catholicism at its best, for all that freedom of individual witness and prophecy which is distinctive of Evangelicalism at its best, and for all that tradition of sound learning and honest, constructive criticism, which has gone now by one name and now by another (Broad Church, Liberal, Modernist), and has so often excited alarm, but which leaves always the gold and silver and the precious stones of the foundations of our faith in brighter relief as against the stubble with which we mix up those foundations . . . Whether it is history, or politics, or science, or moral philosophy, we all seek to grow in the knowledge of God. It would be a pity if we could not be brothers in that search, even if we are moving by different roads.

'All of them alike need the Church which alone can give the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

'For certain am I that the Catholic and the Evangelical may learn from the Modernist, and the Modernist again from the other two, so long as they each and all recognize their membership of the Church, and know that within that Church there is not only room, but absolute need for an infinite variety of gifts.

'I want to see the Church of England rise to the measure of its opportunity by tolerance, by comprehensiveness, by wisdom. It can do it. It can, of course, refuse the call, and content itself with being no more than a denomination. But if it does hear the call, there can one day come a time when it can stand for English Christianity as a whole. Therefore, let us work steadily for reunion, for not until the ranks are closed will the Church make effective appeal, or seriously influence the great masses of the indifferent and unbelievers who remain contentedly outside all institutional religion. That is the great hope for our Church, which has shown that it is able to preserve and reverence the old, without losing its power to value and assimilate the new; which has proved in the past that the sacramentalist and the mystic, the prophet and the philosopher, the scholar and the saint, can all find their home within its borders, and dwell therein in spiritual contentment. Therefore, in that same spirit let us go on, with charity towards all and malice towards none, believing that this country, through its Church, may be the instrument, in the providence of God, of leading the world to that higher life of which Christianity is the inspiration, and to which Christ is the Way.'

Of course none of this is new, but coming from two such representative laymen all of it is significant.

THE ATONEMENT AND MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

By A. L. Lilley, M.A., Canon Residentiary of Hereford.

WHEN St. Paul says, 'I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me,' he is making a personal confession. He is bearing witness to what Christ had been to him, to what in and through Christ he had been able to become. And through this experience he proclaimed what he called his Gospel, the Gospel which is briefly summarized in the words of the Communion Service, that Christ by His death had made 'a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, offering, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.'

Now it is exactly this statement of the Gospel which has become the greatest stumbling-block to many of the most thoughtful people of our own time. For them its chief offence is that it seems to cut at the roots of moral responsibility. Not everyone would be capable of stating the difficulty which it creates in many minds with the definiteness or the daring of Mr. Bernard Shaw. But most of those who do feel the difficulty are no doubt grateful to him for having made it look morally respectable. 'Every man to whom salvation is offered,' says Mr. Shaw, 'has an inalienable natural right to say, "No, thank you: I prefer to retain my full moral responsibility: it is not good for me to be able to load a scapegoat with my sins: I should be less careful how I committed them if I knew they would cost me nothing."'

Now Mr. Shaw is here tilting against a form of the doctrine of atonement which has no doubt been actually held and defended by many Christians. And so far he is of course justified in regarding it as a form of teaching claiming to be Christian. But nothing could well be more different from, nothing could be a greater travesty of, St. Paul's experience of what Christ was to him and of what were the effects in his own life of those his felt relations with Christ. And out of that experience of his, as I

have said already, arose his certainty that Christ was for all men what He had been for him, and that all men could feel, and needed for their perfecting to feel, the same effects of their relationship with Christ which he had felt from his relationship with Him. St. Paul's statement of that certainty became the real Christian doctrine of the Atonement. If therefore we would do justice to that doctrine, we cannot be satisfied with finding the precise meaning of the form of words in which it was conveyed, but must try further and first of all to understand sympathetically the intricate experience to which that form of words gave expression. For, to start with, every human experience is intricate. It involves all our past, a past which we dimly remember or perhaps do not remember at all. And it involves not only our own past but the past of the whole race of men. And not only this, but it involves also a whole world of forces past and present which we can never exactly define — ideals, aspirations, hopes, beliefs, strange baffling contacts of the human spirit with a world beyond itself. We act and feel at every moment within this larger world of feeling and action which we can never clearly know but which is always acting upon us with a kind of vague inspiration. It is through its inspiration that we gain all our higher knowledge of right and wrong, of good and evil. We can gain indeed a plain working knowledge of right and wrong from our ordinary social life, from our just claims upon others and the similar claims of others upon ourselves which our life in society reveals and enforces. But right and wrong have for us a further reach which we can never quite define and yet are always striving after. We want a right which will go deeper in motive and reach farther in unselfish action than is required by immediate social needs. This further reach of right is what we mean by the Divine Law, the perfect will of righteousness. Now we can never see a life which expresses that will more fully than it has found, or, we think, could find expression in ourselves without feeling that we have somehow a share in it. We feel that it has been lived not merely for itself, but also for us. It has for instance the immediate effect of putting us to shame, of accusing our own failure. But its effects do not end there. It awakens in us a new vision of what we might be and a new power of becoming it which but for that life would never have been ours.

Now suppose for a moment we could see a human life in which the furthest imaginable range of selfless good had been attained, a life which seemed to be absolutely one with the will of God. What might we legitimately think, what ought we to think, about the relations of that life to us? Should we not have a right to think that all men had a share in that perfect offering of a human will to God? Ought we not to feel that the humanity in which we all share was a different thing before and after the appearance of that life, that our common humanity had been revealed in that life as having attained its own perfect satisfaction, and that that satisfaction consisted in perfect obedience to, in a perfect fulfilment of, the will of God? In that life humanity would know that the furthest reach of the good had been both revealed and attained. And that is just what St. Paul meant when he boldly proclaimed that the whole world of men, Jew and Gentile alike, shared in the perfect satisfaction of the Divine Will which was manifested, wrought out in act, by the life and death of Christ. He could say no less, if he was right in accounting the life and death of Christ as indeed such perfect obedience to the Divine Will. And this latter admission Mr. Shaw seems after his own manner quite ready to make. If he admits that, he must also admit the import of that life and death for all who share the human nature which was by it thus ennobled and transformed.

But St. Paul does not go on to say that the satisfaction wrought by Christ deprives any single soul of its full moral responsibility. He says just the opposite, *viz.* that the moral responsibility of every soul of man has for the first time been brought out into full relief by Christ's ennobling of humanity. That is the very substance of his doctrine of faith. By faith he means the recognition of what Christ is and has done. It is, alas! quite possible to have no eyes for this enlargement of humanity which Christ has wrought. It is possible to fall back satisfied upon the meagre notions of right and wrong which arise out of our local and temporal social needs, upon the customary right which, as Pascal said, may be one thing this side of the Pyrenees and another thing beyond them. And if we indeed shut our eyes, through spiritual indifference or lethargy, to the new humanity

which Christ wrought out in His sacrificial life, we are just where we were before that life was revealed, we are yet as St. Paul would say in our sins, in bondage to a law which we never think of as the satisfaction of our nature but as its most irksome restriction. If on the other hand our eyes are opened to the wonder of that new life revealed in Christ and to the still greater wonder that we share in it, that through it our nature has been admitted to the mysteries of the perfect good and of the sacrificial devotion which it demands, if in St. Paul's language we have faith in Christ, then there comes to us a new power which will be able and which alone is sufficient to overcome all the difficulties that stand in the way of the largest fulfilment of right, and which will find its satisfaction in the struggle even if complete victory be never attained. That ever and alone satisfying struggle St. Paul called quite simply his crucifixion with Christ. He knew quite well what it cost him, and what it would cost all men who entered upon it. But he called it also his real life, the only life that for him was worth living. Yet it was a life so real, so vivid, so vast in its reach and aim, so free of all bondage to the customs of a particular time and a particular place, that he, the creature of a moment in time, of a mere point in space, could not dare to claim it as entirely his own or indeed as his own at all. It was the life of Christ that was living again in him. 'The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.'

That living sacrificial communion with Christ was what St. Paul recognized as the effects of the Atonement. And if anyone attempts or has attempted to reduce that doctrine to a level which would eliminate moral responsibility instead of heightening it indefinitely, he will find himself exposed to the chastisement not of Mr. Shaw's modest whip but of the scorpions of St. Paul's righteous indignation.

MODERNISTS AND THE ANGLO-CATHOLIC CENTENARY

DURING the past few months the Anglo-Catholic parish clergy have been inviting their brethren at ruri-decanal chapters to co-operate with them in celebrating the centenary of the Oxford Movement. On the whole the response has been generous, and few have refused entirely to associate themselves with the commemoration, though many doubtless have signified their approval with some misgivings and reservations. This apparent unanimity has been in part a tribute to the personal character and devotion of many Anglo-Catholic parish priests, partly a token of the liberal and sympathetic spirit which more and more softens the acerbities of party feeling. The approaching centenary celebrations, however, force Modernists to consider what their real attitude to the movement must be, and how far they can conscientiously go in supporting the proposed festival.

A superficial survey of the Church of England discovers three groups or parties, traditionally described as High, Low, and Broad. Current nomenclature favours the titles of Anglo-Catholic, Evangelical, and Modernist. But Modernists have normally refused to constitute themselves as a party, and perhaps the third place should be given to those who frequently describe themselves as 'Central' Churchmen. However that may be, it seems to me that the true dividing line is a single and simple one, drawn so as to divide all the parties into two groups. On one side of the line stand those who emphasize a traditional and external view of religious authority, whether they be Fundamentalist Evangelicals looking to an infallible Bible or Romanizing Anglo-Catholics looking to an infallible Church. On the other side stand those who, in whatever degree, admit a progressive character in God's self-revelation, and give a place to the enlightened human reason in the appreciation and interpretation of religious truth. Thus we have in our ranks Evangelicals and Catholics who claim, or at any rate do not refuse, the prefix

of 'Liberal,' even when the Liberalism in question is little more than a mild colouring of temper, far removed from the robust variety of the avowed Modernist.

What, then, are the distinctive contributions of the two chief parties in our Church? Generalization is always dangerous, but it may perhaps be maintained that the Evangelical party, springing as it did from the Methodist movement, stands for personal religion, Anglo-Catholicism for corporate religion. One emphasizes the intensely personal relationship between the individual soul and God; the other emphasizes the historic background, and the social environment and obligations of the individual soul in its relationship with God. To the Evangelical, the point of importance is the response of the individual to God's immediate revelation, and compared with this the Church, with its historic memories and its organized unity, is of secondary value. To the Anglo-Catholic the Church is all-important, as providing a historic foundation and a continuous fellowship for the exercise and realization of the Christian experience.

If it is correct to say that the two great parties stand essentially for differences of emphasis rather than differences of substance, it is easy to see, from the Modernist point of view, how each party, when divorced from the Liberal spirit, can involve itself in fundamental error. Thus the Evangelical may come to read his Bible without any regard for the historic background and analysis provided by critical study, preferring to regard it as an infallible oracle, almost as if its material paper and printing ink were charged with some spiritual virtue or presence. In such an atmosphere of thought he becomes an easy prey to those curious psychological impulses which issue in corybantic devotions and fanatical impertinences. Similarly, the Anglo-Catholic may become obsessed with the notion of an infallible Church, and ignoring every lesson of history and every precept of progressive reason, may shut himself up in that self-consistent but unchanging system which must ultimately lead him to Rome.

The excesses of Anglo-Catholicism are such that, given the ingrained Protestantism of the English mind, they inevitably attract more attention than those of Evangelicalism. 'The Protestant underworld' can profess and display its Fundamentalism

as vigorously as it likes without achieving much notoriety. But Romanizing Anglo-Catholicism stands in opposition alike to the peculiar genius of the English Church and the characteristic temper of the English people.

This latter group as represented by the fifty signatories of the recent Romeward manifesto, exhibits a phenomenon curiously puzzling to a liberal mind. Its aim, professed without any notable degree of subtlety, is to approximate the faith and worship of the Church of England as closely as possible to that of Rome. It upholds the complete Roman system without the one factor which holds that system together and gives to it a certain practical force—the authority of the Bishop of Rome. Even though the Romanizers acknowledge—one might almost say, boastfully acknowledge—that the goal of their endeavours is submission to Rome, they are apparently content with a temporary makeshift which, however it may be made to look like Rome, is not and never can be what they wish it to be. When the logic of events drives them, as it surely must, to make their individual submissions to Rome, they will be required to admit that all their present pretensions and claims are utterly mistaken. Meanwhile, by a process of casuistry which evades the average forthright English intelligence they succeed, to their own satisfaction, in squaring vows and undertakings of explicit significance with a policy and a purpose which those undertakings categorically exclude.

In the pursuance of their purposes English parish churches have been turned into close imitations of Roman patterns. Even the cheapness and tawdriness of Rome have been slavishly imitated. The extravagances of Italian devotion to Mary and the saints have been sedulously propagated. Children of ten years old have been taught to make regular confessions under terrifying spiritual penalties. Adults have been instructed to regard absence from mass on Sundays and holidays of obligation (including Corpus Christi and the Assumption) as mortal sin, while the receiving of Communion unfasting is classed with murder and theft in its effect upon the soul. The Prayer Book liturgy has been flagrantly mutilated and rearranged, and even, in extreme cases, replaced by the Latin Mass. The theological and

devotional system preached in the pulpit and imparted to confirmation classes has been in substance and in detail the system of Rome. In such circles the progress of an individual church is measured by the speed with which every mark of 'old Mother Damnable' (as a famous 'convert' once saw fit to describe the church of his baptism) is removed from its services and teaching.

It is clear that Modernists can offer nothing but opposition to this kind of thing, and if the Oxford Movement centenary celebrations involve us in an expression of sympathy with it, then no Modernist, nor indeed, any Churchman outside the group in question, and its large body of secret supporters, can conscientiously take part in them. We may be able to pay honest tribute to the personal piety and character of individual Anglo-Catholic priests, but the processes by which they justify their continued presence in the Church of England do not thereby become more tolerable or intelligible to us.

Fortunately, as the writer of 'Signs of the Times' reminded us in the November *Modern Churchman*, the Oxford Movement was two-headed; and I would maintain that the Romanizing head is at once the more vocal and the less significant of the two. The Centenary Manifesto is itself a testimony to the widespread liberal trend and temper of the Anglo-Catholic Movement. Nor have we far to look in order to find the Modernism of which the signatories complain, though sometimes it may seem to us to be Modernism of a rather timid and unadventurous character. Indeed, if modern Anglo-Catholicism were to be shorn of its 'Modernists,' it would lose most of its not unworthy claim to a reputation for sincere and able scholarship. It is fifty years since the late Dr. Gore and his collaborators in *Lux Mundi* set for the Anglo-Catholic movement a standard of liberal scholarship of which any religious movement might be proud. *Lux Mundi*, as is the fashion with such books, was greeted as a work dangerously modernist, and has since been relegated to the level of commonplace Anglican orthodoxy; but the liberal outlook and temper were assuredly there, and I doubt if the Romanizing Anglo-Catholics of 1933 would find it more acceptable reading to-day than Father Ignatius found it in 1889. In more recent years the writers of *Essays Catholic and Critical* have upheld

for the Movement a lofty standard of learning and liberalism which is in the best *Lux Mundi* tradition. The semi-official Anglo-Catholic answer to Father Vernon's extraordinary apologia was quite remarkably outspoken in its liberalism. Likewise Mr. Kenneth Ingram, in his able little book, *Has the Church Failed?* and in many other writings and addresses, has voiced the views of a large body of Anglo-Catholic layfolk, and they are views with which most Modernists would find themselves in cordial agreement. It is work of this class and type which the Romanizers would disown and reject; but it is the knowledge that the Anglo-Catholic movement as a whole does not disown and reject it which makes it possible for avowed Modernists to join in the centenary celebrations with sincere cordiality.

When we seek to explain and account for the atmosphere and progress of the movement, we must not ignore the personal influence of Newman. It is commonly assumed that John Keble and Dr. Pusey consolidated the movement within the Church of England; but, as Mr. Shane Leslie has suggested, it was Newman who was its true genius and guiding spirit, even though he left it ere the work was well begun. His 'influence stayed with the Church he had left.' His complex, strangely attractive personality had imparted to the Oxford Movement at its beginning an ethos, a touch of 'unearthly beauty' which the mild piety of Keble and the rigid legalism of Pusey could never have supplied.

> 'Under his wand the whole Church of England, which had been comfortably stagnant, rose nervously from the dead.' He 'turned over the dry dust with a wand and signalled treasure in the rubbish heaps of the Church. He touched the wheezy and shrivelled Establishment, and she became the blushing bride of Christ.'

While Newman and his fellow-converts—the flower of an English University—were being treated by Propaganda 'as though they were converts from the swamps of Uganda,' the magical touch of his winsome personality was still upon the Church of England, and the movement he had helped to initiate advanced under the impulse of the spirit he had given to it. The late Mr. Alfred Fawkes has finely described him as 'the father of them that look back'; but it was Newman's strange fate to be at once the sworn leader of the foes of Liberalism and the

possessor of a mind and temper curiously encouraging to liberal thought. He was never, like Manning, 'the excelling High Priest.' He was of the prophetic order, and he combined the spirit of the prophet with the soul of a poet. Perhaps that is the explanation of his intense yet perplexing personal influence. Most people are several people, and in Newman the complex of personalities was so constituted and harmonized that the result was one of unusual power and persuasiveness. The true continuity and development of the Anglo-Catholic movement leads us from Newman through Gore to the writers of *Essays Catholic and Critical*. With much in that movement Modernists may legitimately quarrel; but they cannot fail to recognize in it a real if inconclusive contribution to the best life of the Church of England.

It is arguable that the heyday of the Anglo-Catholic movement is already over, and that the centenary of its inception may justly be celebrated with the funeral rites of a lost cause. Whether this judgment be a fair one or not, certain it is that the movement has never shown any sign of the power which is necessary to convert England, or even the Church of England. Its chief numerical strength has been derived from the clergy and from the not inconsiderable ranks of those who are described as 'ecclesiastically-minded laymen.' The leading Anglo-Catholic churches have been thronged with congregations composed largely of dilletanti and ritual-fanciers, and the number of those who have accepted and adopted the 'whole Catholic system in faith and practice' has remained proportionately small. Here and there an Anglo-Catholic priest of exceptional personal gifts may persuade a parish into his way of thinking, but 'advanced' churches are most successful in seaside and residential districts where there are large reserves of leisured and elderly people. The elaborate ceremonial practiced in such churches requires the assistance of an army of male servers, and to many youths and young men this form of church-work makes a certain appeal. Server-psychology is notoriously quaint, and it is possible that it may sometimes be explained as a phase of sublimated egoism. The common Anglo-Catholic claim that the 'dull, cold worship of Anglicanism' is the reason for small congregations, and that

'the Lord's service as the chief service of the Lord's Day' is a certain cure, is not borne out by the facts. To my knowledge, large suburban churches with a long Catholic tradition, crowded before the war, have been unable to keep their congregations with the passing years and shifting population. Some of the star-churches of the movement, embellished with the names of devoted parish priests of the 'persecution era,' are now deserted and almost derelict. It is probable that more churches have been emptied by the drastic introduction of Catholic practices than have been filled or even maintained by such a policy.

Yet the Church as a whole must acknowledge a debt to the Anglo-Catholic movement, in a recovery of the sense of history, of continuity, of beauty in worship, and of corporate life. In a measure the sixth and seventh sections of 'The Aims of the Modern Churchmen's Union' comprise the Modernist's acknowledgment of that debt. Modernism in the Church of England has been predominantly Protestant in tone and spirit, partly because, in Anglican tradition, the Catholic idea is identified with spiritual and political tyranny, while Protestantism stands for freedom. But this must not blind us to the fact that the Catholic idea, free of Ultramontanism, and in sane and capable hands, has a real place in English Christian thought and life. There are those who, under Anglican conditions, are doing what Tyrrell tried and failed to do in the Church of Rome, and from a point of view very like his own. It is for Modernists, untrammelled by the fetters of strict party allegiances, to approve and encourage the liberal spirit wherever it is found; and it is because the Anglo-Catholic movement has, with whatever limitations, shown itself capable of a liberal mind and outlook, that we can join in the celebrations of its centenary. The Romanizers, like their brethren of the true Roman flag, may reject our approval and despise its motives. There is an Anglo-Catholic as well as a Protestant 'underworld.' We may believe that the true line of Anglican development leads, as the Dean of St. Paul's has said, in the direction of 'a new Reformation—an Erasmian Reformation.' But it is difficult to say that the ideas and ideals of a really liberal Anglo-Catholicism can be ignored as that Reformation proceeds, or that they are incapable of making important

contributions to the liberal synthesis of the future. Modernists stand for 'the historic comprehensiveness of the Church of England,' and it behoves us to be intolerant of nothing save intolerance. You will search the pages of history in vain to find a religious movement which was as perfect as its protagonists maintained or as imperfect as its enemies found it. Good and bad strangely mixed—such is the verdict of experience on movements as well as men. Such will be the verdict of history on the Anglo-Catholic movement, and we do not excuse its faults and errors, whether of teaching or temper, when we pay tribute to character and qualities which deserve the admiration of all thoughtful Christians.

R. Gardner.

THE POETRY OF BROWNING AND THE INCARNATION

By the Rev. Leslie S. Peake, M.A., B.Litt.

FOR two reasons the doctrine of the Incarnation made a special appeal to Browning.

It appealed to him, in the first place, because it supplied a link between the Spirit of God on the one hand and the lowliest form of service or worship performed by man on the other hand. Because Christianity glorified the humble, making the meanest task on earth sacred—even when it took the form of a vulgar, though sincere, bigotry found in a Nonconformist chapel—it seemed of supreme value to the poet who wrote:

> 'All service ranks the same with God—
> With God, whose puppets, best and worst,
> Are we: there is no last nor first.'
>
> 'Pippa Passes.'

It appealed to Browning, in the second place, because it provided him with the best answer to all the problems and perplexities that we have to meet with in life. For Browning Christ was the sign and symbol of Divine Love penetrating the Universe in which he lived. In his case, it must be remembered, the solution of life is always to be found in love rather than in knowledge. Like Tennyson, he turns from the witness of the brain to the

witness of the heart. Knowledge, he maintains, is by its nature incomplete and liable to err, but the emotion of the heart is true—a safe rock on which the philosophy of life may be built. It is because Christ is the highest expression of love that God through Him can solve for us all the perplexing riddles which the Universe contains:

> 'I say the acknowledgement of God in Christ
> Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
> All questions in the earth or out of it.'
>
> 'A Death in the Desert.'

In dealing with the Person of Christ, Browning does not claim to speak to us out of his own personal experience. Nor does he deal with the inner consciousness of Christ, or with the testimony of any of His disciples apart from that of St. John in his poem, 'A Death in the Desert.' This, however, is quite in keeping with Browning's usual method. He prefers to find truth, not in authorities whom all recognize, but in out of the way people who are little known. So in his treatment of Christ he turns to a worldly-minded priest like Blougram, an Arab physician like Karshish, a Greek poet like Cleon, and to visionaries like those in 'Christmas Eve' and 'Easter Day.' So bearing this principle in mind we cannot do better than review in turn those poems in which Browning unfolds his doctrine of incarnate love.

In 'Pauline' the poet addresses our Lord in the most impassioned terms. He has leant upon His bosom, he has kept watch with Him at night on Olivet, he has died with Him on the lonely Cross at Calvary, and he has seen Him as He rose triumphant from the tomb. The poet feels as though he has passed into the inner experience of the Master Himself. Here we are brought face to face with Browning's early convictions after he has passed through the period of storm and stress which marked his adolescence. These convictions do, however, represent the one 'lodestar' from which he was never to turn back in later years.

In 'Bishop Blougram's Apology' the Bishop reaches the highest point in his argument when he asks Gigadibs if he is willing to accept the revelation which has come to him in Jesus Christ. When reason has done all that it can, and has presumably failed in its task, what does Gigadibs think about Christ? May

He not after all be 'THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE?' Does Gigadibs like this Christianity or not?

> 'It may be false, but would you have it true?
> Has it *your* vote to be so if it can?'

In 'Cleon' the poet dreams of an ideal incarnation — the incarnation of some God who will unite in himself all the achievements of art, music, poetry, sculpture, and philosophy. So far no one had ever succeeded in doing this. Life's circumference had only been touched by different men at different points. The ideal person would, Cleon maintains, touch it at every point, and touch it at its highest. He would blend all life's disjointed notes into one perfect harmony. But Cleon dismisses the idea of such an incarnation as an idle dream, and regards the teaching of Paul about Christ as a doctrine that 'could be held by no sane man.' He failed to catch the Christian message of love because in his Greek pride he looked for an incarnation that should be purely intellectual.

'The Sun' in 'Ferishtah's Fancies' is a justification of the tendency to think of God in a human form. Ferishtah claims personality for his God because he himself possesses it. His soul can be moved only by a soul that is kindred to it. The worship of the sun as sun is vain. It is the personality behind the sun that we worship. We cannot thank what is merely insentient.

> 'Fire is fire—
> While what I needs must thank, must needs include
> Purpose with power,—humanity like mine.'

The whole thing may be a great mystery, but may it not be that just as fire is cradled in flint, so God became incarnate in the form of man?

More important than these references are the statements contained in 'Christmas Eve' and 'Easter Day,' 'An Epistle of Karshish,' 'Saul,' 'A Death in the Desert,' and certain passages in 'The Ring and the Book.' In all these poems Christ is represented as the supreme revelation of incarnate love.

The speaker in 'Christmas Eve' is disgusted in turn with the bigotry that he finds in a Nonconformist chapel, the error which lurks in St. Peter's at Rome, and the false teaching that is given by a professor at Göttingen. He is, however, somewhat recon-

ciled when he discovers that love lies at the basis of all the ignorance that seems so manifest. The midnight mass at St. Peter's, in spite of all its overdone splendour and false beliefs, cannot obscure Christ who is represented as

> 'He who trod
> Very man and very God,
> This earth in weakness, shame, and pain.'

As for the Göttingen professor, who taught that Christ was only a myth,

> 'May Christ do for him what no mere man shall,
> And stand confessed as the God of salvation.'

In 'Easter Day' the speaker, who catches a vision of Christ, is told by Him that Nature, Art, and Mind are all choices that are vain. The one thing which the visionary needs is Love — the last thing that he requests. In bidding him take Love Christ reminds him how He Himself created man and died for him in His own flesh. Why does he not believe? Is it because the vision of God's love is so great? The visionary cowers before Him, and addresses Christ as 'Thou Love of God!'

It is true that both these poems are 'dramatic' in conception. At the same time we may well agree with writers like Herford, Berdoe, Griffin and Minchin that the root of Browning's convictions is to be found at the basis of both.

'An Epistle of Karshish' gives an imaginary account of an interview that is said to take place at Bethany between Karshish, an Arab physician, and Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary. Lazarus declares that he has been raised from the dead by a Nazarene physician, who was none other than God Himself in human form. Karshish is inclined to believe that Lazarus is mad, but is seriously troubled by the new attitude to life which Lazarus has adopted. He is perfectly cheerful if a small child falls ill and seems likely to die, and this cheerfulness is not due to any callousness in his nature. He displays no interest in the great military force that Rome is preparing for the destruction of Jerusalem — a matter of vital concern to every Jew. On the other hand he is moved at once at the sight of what appears to be only a trivial sin. His whole attitude to life has been changed by his heavenly trance, and Karshish feels that there may be some truth in his story. He himself does not want to be led away by

any idle tale, but at the end of the poem he cannot help crying out:

> 'The very God! Think, Abib; dost thou think?
> So, the All-Great, were the All-Loving too—
> So, through the thunder comes a human voice
> Saying, "O heart I made, a heart beats here!
> Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself!
> Thou hast no power nor mayst conceive of mine,
> But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
> And thou must love me, who have died for thee."
> The madman saith He said so: it is strange.'

In 'Saul,' David passes from the contemplation of the love that lies in his own heart to the contemplation of a greater love that must lie in the heart of God if the creature is not to surpass the Creator. In an outburst of prophecy, that never fails to stir the reader, the incarnation of Christ is foretold:

> 'Tis the weakness in strength, that I cry for! my flesh, that I seek
> In the Godhead! I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall be
> A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me,
> Thou shalt love and be loved by, for ever: a Hand like this hand
> Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the Christ stand!

In 'A Death in the Desert,' St. John, the beloved disciple, attempts to answer certain questions on the Person of Christ which he feels will be raised by future generations. People in time will come to regard both John and Christ as myths. What can John say to them? He would remind them that Christ is as real to-day as He was when He walked in Galilee. The force of Christianity does not lie so much in its past history as in its redemptive power, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ is as powerful to-day as ever it was. Moreover, faith is better than sight. To base our belief in Christ on miracles alone is in itself valueless. John had both seen the miracles of Christ and been present at the Transfiguration, yet this had not prevented him from deserting His Lord like the rest. It is the love of Christ, not His miracles, that matters. The miracles themselves are nought, but the love of God in Christ, once accepted by reason, will solve all the problems in the world and out of it. Man necessarily passes from mistake to fact, but John is certain that doubt and struggle will create rather than retard the progress of Christianity.

In 'The Ring and the Book' the Pope is struck by the fact that God should choose this planet out of all the worlds that exist as the scene for His transcendent act of love. Like the apostle

John, he too believes that doubt, difficulty, and temptation will prove a spur rather than a hindrance to the cause of Christianity. Pompilia, at the birth of her own child, confesses that the grace of God receives its fullest revelation in the birth of His Son.

> 'I never realised God's birth before,
> How He grew likest God in being born.'

The 'Epilogue' to the 'Dramatis Personae' represents the religious views of David, Renan, and Browning. David stands for the highest point reached in Hebrew theism — a God 'whose mercy endureth for ever.' Renan expresses the attitude of a people who can find no God in the world at all. Browning brings comfort and hope in his doctrine of the incarnate Christ.

> 'That one Face, far from vanish, rather grows,
> Or decomposes but to recompose,
> Become my universe that feels and knows.'

But in spite of all the revelations of God that are vouchsafed to us in the Person of His Son, Browning would have us remember that such revelations as seen and interpreted by man must of necessity remain incomplete. The Pope in 'The Ring and the Book' is sure that God exists, and he is equally certain that finite intelligence can never hope to comprehend Him fully. The mind of man, like a convex glass, reflects the image of God to a very small degree. The heart, too, has its own misgivings. Nor can the Pope understand the materialistic outlook of Pompilia's companions: the Aretine Bishop who told her to go back to her persecutor, the friar who declined to help her because he was afraid of the world, and the nuns who believed in her purity when they thought that she had no money, but who were only too ready to harm her when they discovered that she had rich possessions which they might make their own. 'Fears and Scruples' is an illustration of the spiritual uses of uncertainty. The silence of God is likened to that of a friend who wrote many valuable letters, but who never came into actual contact with his correspondent. In life the Infinite is always silent; it is only the Finite that deigns to speak.

> 'We may question with wand of science,
> Explain, deride, and discuss;
> But only in meditation
> The Mystery speaks to us.'

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THE INCARNATION?

By Professor J. F. Bethune-Baker, D.D., Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, Cambridge.

THE Incarnation is a doctrine. If the doctrine be true, the Incarnation is a fact. If it is not true, there is the faith of the Incarnation in which a man might well be content to live and die. Christianity is the religion of the Incarnation. But Christianity is a phenomenon which, like all else in this world, has had a historical development. It did not begin with the faith of the Incarnation. It had its origin at a definite place and period in the history of mankind, its roots went far back into the past, and to this day, after all the changes it has undergone since its emergence just nineteen hundred years ago, it retains characteristics that mark the place and time of its origin — survivals of a much more primitive form of religion. The faith of the Incarnation has not permeated it, though it depends on belief that the Incarnation as a historical event is the central fact in the history of the world.

There are plenty of facts at the back of Christianity, though all the accounts we have of them are so intertwined with inferences from them that we are much better informed about the impression they made than we are about what most of us call the facts themselves. But after all, it is the impression produced on us that is for us the fact of which we have to take account. And all our Christian doctrines are attempts to find some kind of formula that will account for this kind of fact. Never can we give an account of anything except by using ideas we already have — setting the thing in relation to the world of life and thought that we know, finding a place for it in that world, so that it isn't left isolated, outside.

And this is the case with the new experience in which Christianity had its origin. They were Jews, with the background of thought which the Old Testament and some later Jewish writings enable us to picture clearly enough, and they gave their account

in the terms of this religious background. They have the idea of God as creator of the world, working out a purpose, revealing His purpose and will through events, through themselves as His chosen people, and through individuals who were His spokesmen and agents from time to time. There is no idea of incarnation here. The thought of a man who was God would have been abhorrent to them all. They thought rather in terms of inspiration.

I pause a moment. Some years ago an able and distinguished scholar and student of the history of Christian doctrine sought to bring Christians back to this thought of inspiration and to restate Christian doctrine in its terms. The idea of Incarnation, he argued, was mythological.

'Mythological.' It is still rather a sinister word in the ears of the people. But readers of Plato have always known better—they have known that, when on the high plane of reason and logic and dialectic you could find no formula which would express the truth you divined, you turned to a μῦθος: you told a tale. In the form of a story about men and women and familiar things you suggested the truth you could not express. All that mattered was that it should be like the truth and suggest the right idea.

And the work of many students of archaeology and primitive religion in recent years has rescued the words 'myth' and 'mythology' from the merely irrational sense they had of old. It is no disparagement of our doctrines to say that many of them have the character of all religious mythology. It is a high form of mythology that gives us parts of our creeds, and hymns, and prayers. All that we can fairly ask is that our doctrines should be like the truth, and (both as a Church and as individuals in the course of our own growth in knowledge and experience) be on our guard lest old myths, old stories that we have inherited and gone on telling, get out of focus and cease to suggest what is like the truth to men and women of a different mentality in a new environment of knowledge—in a new world of ideas.

The idea of Incarnation mythological? Well, I do not exclude the possibility that some day a better term might be found to express, in relation to the ideas and the knowledge of a later age, the same conviction as to the real significance of Jesus in the history of the world that was expressed by 'incarnation.' God was incarnate in Jesus. 'God' and 'flesh' (in a very large

sense of the word, of course) are the only terms involved, 'God' and the world and 'Man'; and I suppose we shall always have these terms in use, however much they may be broadened out. We are already far removed from the world of ideas of God and Man that knew nothing of the knowledge of the universe and of man's place in it, that has been won from the time of Copernicus and Galileo to to-day. But the Christian conviction might still stand firm that in Jesus, the man, in his life and experience in the world at a moment of the historic evolutionary process, God was revealed in His essential being and character in relation to us. However much our conception of God and our knowledge of man may be enlarged, whatever new content we put into both terms, we may still be able to feel that the whole experience, of which the man Jesus was the subject, and has been, and still is, the centre, is most adequately accounted for by the old formula of Incarnation. Meanwhile, I am myself so deeply convinced that the Christian philosophy of life can never be expressed by use of 'inspiration' instead of 'incarnation' in our doctrine, that I must say more about the objection to the established term.

When the distinguished scholar to whom I have referred described this belief or this term as mythological, I think he had something else in view other than the doctrine itself. And I must refer to this something else, though I should be glad if it were not necessary. But it is an old belief about the way in which the Incarnation was effected that still holds its place in our religious tradition, and in my opinion it is inconsistent with a true theology and the real faith of the Incarnation. It is a μῦθος, and one that as it stands is not 'like the truth,' even though it may suggest something that is 'like the truth.' It is the story of the miraculous birth of Jesus, which in the minds of most Christians even to-day, and in the minds of nearly all who attack the Christian religion, is closely associated with the idea of the Incarnation: though to all who seek real reconciliation between the old and the new it is an incubus and an impediment. I believe that the doctrine was arrived at independently of knowledge of or belief in that story, and that the story is a product of the myth-making, poetic instincts of mankind in an attempt to express what was felt about Jesus, and the unknown 'quantity' or 'quality' of the experiences connected with Him.

To say that His birth was brought about in a way out of the normal course of things was only to say what in the group of stories to which this story belongs is said of His great precursor, John Baptist, and had been said long earlier by Jewish chroniclers of Isaac, the ancestor of their race, though the divine action is pictured as still more immediate in the case of Jesus. Throughout the Old Testament history, divine action is conceived as having the character of miracle, and where things are ascribed to the special action of God the narrative describing them will tell of miracle. The story of the miraculous birth is a vivid way of expressing, and finding as it were a cause for, the early belief of Christians that the being and life of Jesus from its beginning was divinely fashioned and directed. And in my judgment its historical value for us is the evidence it furnishes of that early conviction.

Neither St. Paul nor St. John, nor the author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, makes any use of the idea of a miraculous birth in building up his conception of Jesus. And these are the three first Christian theologians. So theologians to-day might be content to let the story lie unnoticed, as they usually do at the present time. I could not be entirely silent about it to-day. And there is another reason why I cannot. The story, if believed to have literal truth, encourages a view of the ways in which God works in the world that nothing really known to us justifies. And so far as it does that, it encourages a false theology, a mistaken view of the real relation between the world and us. I will not enlarge on this point. Anyone who is at all concerned about it should read the first section of the Report of the Lambeth Conference of 1930 on 'The Christian Doctrine of God.'

I wish this part of the Report was more widely known. For a wave of irrationalism seems to be spreading among us to-day from Germany and America, which carries with it a kind of religious revival indeed, which no one could wish to disparage, but one that is based on a view of the relation between God and the world and man, that the doctrine of the Incarnation, as I understand it, wholly contradicts. It is based on the view that there is nothing in common between man and God, no way from man to God, no continuity between this world and the next. None of the lines of human development—not the highest achievements of the mind and spirit of man—provide a way to God. Human

history, the long and painful struggle of man in the world, is left without meaning if man must divest himself of all that his experience has taught him before he can hear the Word of God speaking to him, if all that experience is of no value to point and lead him to God. Or again, if each one of us must make his decisions by banishing from his mind all that he knows and using none of his own powers of reasoning. There is surely no kind of security that God will speak to us, or that we shall hear His Word aright, if we abjure the use of our own reason, which 'is indeed,' as Bishop Butler said, 'the only faculty we have wherewith to judge concerning anything, even revelation itself.' Even if we *could* empty ourselves so wholly as to become a blank on which a Word of God could be written, we have no security that it will not be a word from our own mind and heart, from our own limited experience, that wells up to expression.

There are ideas in our Christian tradition that encourage this conception. I believe they are all really survivals from pre-Christian religion, ideas that are inconsistent with the central thought of the Incarnation. And I believe that the story of the miraculous birth reflects this pre-Christian conception of Man and the world and God, *viz.* that it was only by a break in the natural order that a real revelation of God could be made: that if Jesus was what Christians had come to believe He was, then He could not have been naturally born. 'Inconsistent,' I said, 'with the central thought of the Incarnation.' So I come to the heart of my subject. What is this central thought? Where do we get it? The idea, I have said, was not reached at once. For the first Christians, on Jewish ground, with Jewish environment and ideas, the highest valuation they could put on Jesus was to say He was the Messiah (in Greek, the Christ) if they kept to their canon of Scripture; or the Son of Man in the apocalyptic sense if they followed later religious leaders of their own race; or Son of God if they were most impressed by the attitude of Jesus to God as that of a son on earth to a father in heaven.

St. Paul poured into both terms 'Son' and 'Christ' a richness of content and meaning that went far beyond all earlier ideas about the Messiah. The idea of God that he had as a Jew must have been enlarged. We have to judge from incidental sayings and phrases in his letters, not always obviously reconcilable; there is no real exposition of a coherent system. But I

think there cannot be doubt that he had in mind a doctrine similar to the doctrine of Incarnation, though to say as he does that 'the fulness of godhead dwelt bodily' in Jesus is not quite the same. He reached his doctrine by using other ideas and working along other lines of thought than those which led to the actual expression 'the Incarnation.'

For that we must turn to another great early Christian theologian, the author of the Gospel according to St. John. In the preface to his gospel he gives us the background of his thought. For our purpose to-day we are not concerned with origins, nor with obvious points of contact with the great story of Creation at the beginning of our Bible, nor even with doubtful points of exegesis and the meanings put on particular phrases by later Christian theologians in building up their system of doctrine. We are only concerned to see that the writer had a philosophy of the universe in mind, a theory about the world and man, into which he had to fit the new experience which came to him, however it came to him—for I beg no disputed questions—whether by direct personal association with Jesus in His lifetime, or by intimate contact with Christians afterwards. All that is certain is that he was a devoted disciple and probably a leader of a group of Christians. And he has a philosophy ready to hand, with God as its dominant term, and the other terms Logos and Life and Light.

Familiar as the passage is, let me read it again. I follow Westcott and Hort's punctuation and interpretation. I have no doubt it is right. And I must keep the Greek word 'Logos.'

> 'In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him: and without Him was not anything made. That which hath been made in Him was life: and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness overcame it not. The true light which lighteth every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and they that were His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name; which were begotten, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Logos became flesh, and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth' (*John* i, 1-14).

That, then, is his theory of things, his philosophy. No one in the New Testament has so cosmic, so organic, so coherent à

view of things as St. John. Let me comment on it. There is, to start with, God as the ground of all, with His Logos which is also God. There is no world, for world means that which is ordered, organized, and the writer's philosophy goes back to the beginning and the 'void' or chaos of the story in *Genesis*, for which his own equivalent is darkness.

The account goes on to say that it was through the exercise of this Logos, through the employment, the energy, the activity of it, that everything came into being—that is to say, that what we call creation was effected, the universe came into being. And then two new terms are used that everyone can understand. This Logos is the 'life' of all that has come into being and the 'light' of men.

Then comes the reference back to the account in *Genesis* ['the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep'] and the idea of creative activity as that which gives form to, shapes and moulds, something that is already there, and in that way produces what is new and was not before. A void, a chaos—there is no real world till it is fashioned and set in order. Or, another metaphor, it is dark, and the light shines in it, and even though the light does not permeate it all, yet the darkness cannot overcome it: it persists. And this light is the Logos of God, which is God, creative, life giving, light giving. So that you might say that the Logos is a term for this creative activity of God which is the ground of all things, yet never at rest, always in action. 'Spirit,' creative and revealing, might be our best translation to-day. If the image of Light is employed, it is always 'coming into the world' as the real light that enlightens every man.

And St. John goes on to say that although this Logos is in the world, and it was through him that the world and men came into being, so that they are his own—his home and household and family—yet the world did not know it, did not recognize him, and those of his household did not receive or welcome him. Among them all the time, actually in them as life and light, he remained invisible, unrecognized, unknown.

Yet there were some who did receive—take hold of, catch—him, and thus were able to become τέκνα θεοῦ, children of God, believing in the divine. And so our writer calls them 'begotten of God' in contrast with those who only recognize the will of the

flesh and the will of men as the ground of their being. I suppose he has in mind all men of all races who recognized the Logos, the life, the light, within them and in the world as Divine, and followed its leading on a plane above that of 'the will of the flesh' and 'the will of man.' It is at the same time God revealing and man discovering—for 'revelation' there can never be unless man sees and seizes. So one of the best-known early apologists for the Faith, first a philosopher, then a Christian, and at the end a martyr, claimed prophets of Israel and Greek philosophers who had lived 'with Logos' as Christians. They may have been but few who caught the significance of elements of their own nature and experience that pointed to the Logos of God within and without, yet others learnt from them and came to know for themselves. And all these had power to become 'children of God.' And with them are contrasted what we might call to-day the 'materialists,' and the mere humanists, of all ages who did not discover God in the life of things and the light within them. 'The will of the flesh' and 'the will of man' sufficed them.

This, to me, is the plain meaning of St. John's prologue, and, as I have said, it was so understood, at least as regards outstanding leaders of religion and philosophy, soon after it was written. It gives St. John's theology, his philosophy of life: the world of ideas that is his background. He had all these ideas before he became a Christian at all. He has to fit his new experience into this framework, and he does it by a flash of insight, a leap of imagination. Jesus was the very Logos become flesh, come into the world visibly, dwelling among us, incarnate. There is no suggestion that there was any break in the continuity of things. It is all quite natural, a further and completer expression of what has always been going on. Life and light to be found in Jesus is the main theme of his gospel, and the Logos was always the source of life and light to men.

I think that this valuation of Jesus finds its true meaning only in connexion with the philosophy of life set out in the whole passage. It ought not—this idea of the Incarnation—to be isolated from its context. In the writer's thought this historical incarnation is all in line with what has been. It is a further stage in a process of divine creative revelation.

From the moment, if ever there was a moment, when Creation

began there was incarnation. The Logos of God became expressive. Thought, purpose, became Word, achievement. Of course, it is what we see everywhere in our own experience in what we call creative work : it is the embodiment of the creator's idea or thought or purpose, to the best of his ability, with the material or medium available, so far as he can shape it to his end.

So the Incarnation is not limited to a moment of history that is past and gone. It is a theory about the nature and meaning of the universe, and it describes something that is going on all the time. What is specifically called by Christians 'the Incarnation' is only a visible outstanding example, or illustration, of the whole process, which has God as its ground and God within it, sustaining and shaping and guiding. If you will have it 'unique,' it must be in degree, not in kind.

And now, in conclusion, I must turn to some of the implications of this doctrine. What does the Faith of the Incarnation involve, if this is the meaning of the doctrine? I can only indicate characteristics that seem to me to call for special notice at the moment.

1. Clearly it admits of no disparagement of the world, of 'matter,' or of man and his natural capacities. All these are the vehicle and means of manifestation of the Divine, which is ever seeking to reveal Itself by and through them. The realists or materialists of all ages are at least right in thinking that one of the ways to knowledge of the truth is to explore to the utmost the potentialities of matter. Again, there is no gulf between man and God if the Logos of God could be embodied in a man. If we speak of this world and the next, this life and the life to come, we are using metaphors of space and time. We can have no absolute contrasts : there is continuity. The faith of the Incarnation denies the doctrine of the 'absolutely other.' It is in and through this world and all its interests and activities and personal relationships that the life eternal is to be reached. In and through them must come our only possible revelation — we at once discover for ourselves and have revealed to us as much of the truth of things as we are capable of apprehending. So the humanists, too, are right at least in their protest against the idea that man has no part to play in working out his own salvation.

2. To call Jesus the incarnate Logos of God is to express the conviction that the purpose and plan of God in creation was

realized by Him and revealed in Him and His life's experience. There was shown the true meaning and worth of the world and human life : a standard is given by which to judge between false and true in thought and will and achievement. When it is said to-day that 'Jesus has become the conscience of the world,' the phrase might be taken as a short description of the moral aspect of the Faith. It is only St. John, on the basis of his dominant idea, who can say plainly 'God is love.'

3. Again, clearly the faith of the Incarnation defines a conception of God as sharing in the pain and suffering of the world as we know it. The Cross is the symbol of the Incarnation. God is directing the process from within. I cannot enlarge now on this characteristic of the faith. There is another I must select.

4. St. John was not an evolutionist before his time. But his theology might be stated truly in the terms of our modern epigenetic thought. It is a theology of process with spirit as its ground and its inner motive power. It is only St. John, again, who gives us the plain statement 'God is spirit.' Jesus emerges and has the newness which belongs to that which, to our observation, appears suddenly. We could not predict when or what it would be; we cannot see all that led to it. But the way was prepared. And I think it is very important to note that when he says the Logos became flesh, was incarnated, as it had not been before, there is no kind of suggestion that the activity of the Logos was fully expended.

I think we are often misled, and mislead others, by the high mythology of popular expressions of the doctrine of the Trinity. The Logos altogether disappears. The analogy of personal relationships in the human family has moulded creeds and prayers and hymns, and the functions or activities which were conceived by St. John as those of the Logos are distributed between the Son and the Holy Spirit. But in our scientific doctrine it is one and the same God—one and the same Spirit—whatever name is used. And so it is to St. John.

Those who speak of the 'finality' of Christianity should, I think, attach more weight than they always do to the conception of the Spirit which he expresses later on in his gospel. For this 'spirit' of Jesus is still the Logos. It is always 'coming'; it came 'in the flesh,' in Jesus; it is always 'coming' when Jesus is in the world no longer, though then it is called by Christians

the spirit of Jesus. 'I go away and I come to you'; both are present tenses, and it is an ever-present activity that is asserted, an ever-present activity of God. So St. John links the future with the past and looks forward to ever-growing knowledge under the guidance of the same Logos. 'I have many things to say unto you . . . He shall lead you along the way to all truth.'

And so—and these must be my last words—the faith of the Incarnation leaves room for further epigenetic developments of the world and man; further revelations of the Logos, that is the Spirit of God, creative of life and light; and further discoveries by man as he grows able to receive, further growth and progress towards the realization of his real being.

BOOK REVIEWS

RE-THINKING MISSIONS *

(A Laymen's Enquiry.)

During the last few years, friends of Christian missions in all parts of the world have been greatly disquieted by the steady decline in the support given to missions in the 'sending' countries—a decline which seems to have affected almost every denomination, with the possible exception of a few of the smaller bodies in which there has been a notable spiritual revival, generally along 'Fundamentalist' lines.

This decline has nowhere been more serious than in the United States of America; and it was in order to explore the reasons for this, and if possible, to restore the Missionary Movement to a central place of interest in the programme of the Christian Churches of America, that a Commission of Laymen was appointed, 'unofficially representing seven denominations, to visit India, China and Japan in the winter of 1931-32, and to report to their home Churches on the situation, as they had seen it.' Their Report is now published in a large volume of 350 pages, under the challenging title: *Re-Thinking Missions.*

There may perhaps be a tendency on the part of English Churchmen to pay but little attention to this Report; partly because they feel that the American point of view is so different from the English that there will be little common ground between the two; and partly because the preliminary notices of the Report in the Press, which singled out a few of the more startling observations and recommendations,—and (it may be added) the absurdly laudatory extract from a popular American writer on the paper cover of the volume—tended to annoy, rather than to attract, men of sober minds.

Nevertheless, it would be a great pity for any section of Christian opinion to ignore the Report, or to receive it merely with hostile criticism. However much one may differ from some of its assumption or conclusions, there is much in it that is of exceptional value, both in the facts brought forward, and in the diagnosis and remedies proposed.

* Harper & Bros., New York, $2; Cheap Indian Edition, Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, Calcutta, Rs. 2/8.

At the outset, the Report faces the fundamental question: *'Should the work of the Christian Missions be continued?'* To this question, its answer is given with decision and conviction:—

> 'The question is somewhat like asking whether goodwill should continue or cease to express itself. It is always reasonable to ask whether this goodwill might take quite different shape . . . But that missions should go on, with whatever changes, we regard as beyond serious question' (p. 4).

At the same time, the Report is no less emphatic that far-reaching changes in missionary policy are called for.—'In our judgment, there is not alone *room* for change, there is *necessity* for change' (p. 5.).

The early chapters of the Report (I to IV) deal mainly with the fundamental theological basis of missions. The point of view of these chapters is frankly Protestant, and to a large extent 'Liberal'; and for this reason, they are not likely to command the assent of some large sections of missionary opinion, which do not share this outlook. The writers are evidently but little influenced by the ultra-modern reaction against Liberalism which has lately been so evident in many quarters.

They are not attracted by the lure of Catholicism, Roman or Anglican; nor are they perturbed by the denunciations and warnings of Barth and the 'New Calvinism.' They find the centre of the Christian Message in the two great Commandments, to love God and to love our Neighbour (p. 50), and its aim in the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth, with all the implications of social service which this involves—although they frankly recognise that the 'Social Gospel' cannot of itself be an adequate substitute for deeper spiritual values and visions (p. 63). Their definition of the central aim of missions should be carefully noted, for it gives the keynote to their own conception of the missionary ideal, and the consequent reforms which they advocate in missionary methods. It runs as follows:—

> 'To seek with people of other lands a true knowledge and love of God, expressing in life and word what we have learnt through Jesus Christ, and to endeavour to give effect to His Spirit in the life of the world' (pp. 59 and 326).

This statement of the missionary aim will be regarded by many as inadequate. Neither Catholic nor Calvinist will be satisfied with it; for it leaves out of account the conception of the Church as the Divinely-authorised representative of Christ on earth; and it implicitly rejects the Barthian claim that Christianity is 'entirely other' than all non-Christian religious experience and movements. Nevertheless, this conception of the missionary purpose undoubtedly reflects the mind, not only of this group of representative American laymen, but also of a large body of lay Christian opinion in all parts of the world and in all denominations, together with a small but not unimportant section of opinion among missionaries themselves, which is steadily tending to discard the views of missions as a campaign for religious world-supremacy in favour of the ideal of a co-operative search for truth and goodness, by the method of mutual contribution. On this subject, the Report has openly stated what has hitherto, as a rule, only been whispered in private, particularly among the younger adherents of the Churches. The Report also brings a wholesome challenge to those who glibly repeat the catch-phrases which are at present so popular in missionary circles (such as the statement that 'Our message is Jesus Christ'); and asks that the real meaning of such phrases should be made more clear (p. 52).

The central and latter part of the Report (Chapters V to XII) deals with various aspects of the missionary enterprise, and makes suggestions under each head:—

The Mission and the Church.
Missionary Education.
Missionary Colleges.
Medical Missions.
Missions and Industry.
Women's Interests and Home Administration.

It is impossible here to make more than one or two selections from a mass of exceedingly interesting and valuable material.

Chapter V (The Mission and the Church) is one of the most challenging in the volume. The writers consider that missionary achievement in organising the Church has been 'perhaps *less* successful than any other major undertaking of the missionary movements' (p. 86). They have little patience with the denominational difference between the Churches, and contrast 'the objective facts of the Gospel' with 'the speculative theories of the Creeds' (p. 84). At the same time, they have little faith in schemes for organic reunion (p. 93); and their vision of the Indian Church of the future is that of a Church 'not re-founded upon doctrine, but re-focussed upon the vital issues of life' (p. 114). They wish to see a drastic reform of the lines of teaching in the Theological Colleges; and a gradual withdrawal (by means of decreasing scale) of all *money*-subsidies from the Churches Overseas to the Churches in the Mission Field (p. 115).

With regard to the problem of Evangelism, their central principle is that the real dynamic in drawing men to Christ is to be found in the Christian *life* as a whole, including its unconscious influence. Where evangelistic preaching is a spontaneous effort to pass on through words the vital values of Christian experience, it is an integral part of Christian witness. But, the Report considers that the old methods of evangelistic preaching need thorough revision. In particular, the writers hold that the Christian evangelist ought not to urge converts in all cases to sever their connection with their old religious community; describing this as 'a cruel pedagogy,' comparable to medieval surgery in the human suffering which it involves, and (in spite of the spirit of heroism which it has developed) unsatisfactory in its permanent results (p. 30). In place of this, they advocate a new attitude of co-operation between Christian leaders and 'men of goodwill' of all religions; endorsing in this matter the policy advocated by the Jerusalem Missionary Conference in 1928, but advocating even a more thorough change than had been contemplated by the Jerusalem Fathers.

The report is frankly critical of much that the writers observed on the Mission Field. Of the missionaries themselves, they say: 'There are many of conspicuous power, true saintliness and a sublime spirit of devotion; a greater number seemed to us of limited outlook and capacity; and there are not a few whose vision has become obscured by the intricacies, diversions, frictions and details of a task too great for their powers and their hearts' (p. 15). Of Christian Schools in India, they write: 'One could not help loving the dark, sensitive little faces of the well-mannered children; but the teachers and the teaching were, in the main, deplorable' (p. 131). Of American Medical Missions in the Orient, their impression 'was in general one of disappointment' (p. 201), partly due to the sheer pressure of over-work and under-staffing, and consequent professional inefficiency. Specially vigorous is the criticism of the Report on the missionary attitude towards industrial problems. 'Few missionaries are competent to deal with

industrial problems, and many do not know they really exist. Too many still live in a world where affirmations like "the iron did float" or "the sun did stand still" seem significant' (p. 244).

With regard to Christian Literature, while appreciating the work that has been done along some lines, they point out that 'the effort to maintain a "theological middle ground" has not produced good Christian literature. The endeavour to please everybody has resulted in pleasing very few. It would be better to publish books for those near each theological extreme impartially, than to continue a foreign theological censorship' (p. 192).

With regard to the policy of 'Indianisation' in the Church, the Report urges that this movement needs to be developed much more rapidly than has been the case in the past, when so-called 'Devolution' has often been more nominal than real, and the missionaries, by retaining in their hands the power and the finances of the Churches, have been able to exercise a silent but irresistible control over the policy of the Indian leaders (pp. 305, 306). At the same time they frankly recognise that this policy of Devolution is liable to lead to a decline in efficiency, at any rate as measured by Western standards.

In their recommendations for re-organisation of Missions at Home, they stress the importance of Denominational co-operation and concentration and advocate a single Inter-denominational central Mission Council for Christian Service abroad. The principle conclusions of the Report are summarised in the closing pages (pp. 325-326). Sufficient has been said to indicate that the criticisms and recommendations of the commission demand serious consideration from all true well-wishers of missions.

E. C. Dewick.

FOR THE FRONT LINE*

This volume contains the Cambridge Lectures in Pastoral Theology for 1925-6. The late Bishop Knight treats his subject in a very thorough and exhaustive manner. There is here the same breadth of view which characterised Dr. Knight's Saturday articles in *The Times*, and which made them welcome to churchmen of many different shades of opinion.

> 'Pastoral Theology may be defined as the science or art by which the Christian pastor seeks to train his people in the knowledge of the faith, the practice of the Christian life, and the attainment of the Christian character. It is concerned with the methods by which Christianity may be most effectively offered to men in terms they can understand and respond to in their lives. It must combine loyalty to the Christian faith and order with a readiness to accept all that is found to be true in each age, combining what is old and new to meet the varying needs and conditions of men' (p. 7).

There will be few who will quarrel with this definition of the task of pastoral theology, and yet we venture to think that the ambiguity which lies in the first sentence of it goes to the root of the problem which continually presents itself to the mind of the reader as he follows these lectures. That ambiguity lies in the alternative 'science or art.' The methods of science are very different to the methods of art. The artist says in effect, 'This is what I see: take it or leave it, what care I?' The scientist says in effect, 'This is the road you have travelled so far, the next milestone is over that hill you see in front: now get on with it, and don't waste your

* *Fulfilling the Ministry*. By S. K. Knight, D.D., late Bishop of Jarrow. (Cambridge University Press: 1932. 7/6.)

time botanising in the neighbouring woods.' Apply these two attitudes to pastoral theology and the problem at once arises, which is the better method for 'training people in the knowledge of the faith, the practice of the Christian life, and the attainment of the Christian character'? Bishop Knight is definitely on the side of the scientists. It is of course true that we cannot get along without something of both methods. At the same time the present condition of the Church of England may lead some of us to feel that we are suffering from an overdose of the application of the scientific method to parochial work, and that many parish priests, rural deans, and diocesan officials, would be better evangelists, pastors, and teachers, if they could bring themselves to study the wayside flora and fauna. With this proviso in mind we may receive with gratitude the very excellent advice which Dr. Knight has given us.

In a chapter on 'The Faith,' he asserts the necessity for doctrine. Modernists will readily agree that what is needed is effective doctrinal preaching and teaching:

> 'Definite Church teaching is teaching which inculcates the Christian faith and life in such terms as to commend themselves to the mind, are approved by the affections, and endorsed by the will . . . The definiteness we aim at is attained only when we are able to help others to give themselves by a deliberate act of the will and the assent of the whole man to the living verities of the revelation of God in Christ . . . Simple instruction in matters of faith requires sound learning and real sympathy . . . We must know our subject and we must know our people' (pp. 22 and 23).

After a chapter on the position of the Church of England as part of the Catholic Church, a chapter which emphasises the particular heritage of English Christianity, Dr. Knight has considered the work of the ministry under five heads: Priests, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, and Study. On each subject there is much which will be found most useful, coming as it does from a rich personal experience of parish life. If there are minor points on which we would disagree with Dr. Knight, these are on the fringe and not of the essence of his theme; and we have to remember that he is writing mainly for parishes in large centres of population, and not for country parishes. The changes he suggests in the ordering of services are on the conservative side, and many will feel, for example, that no amount of preliminary care and decent ordering of the service can make the present service of Baptism a reality for simple people.

On the subject of study Dr. Knight has quoted with approval the words of the Bishop of Gloucester:

> 'It is possible to be a good medical man, or a quite first-class engineer, and yet be without a cultivated mind; but a clergyman, however thorough a knowledge of theology he may have, who is below the general standard of culture, and does not know how educated people think, is a danger to the Church.'

We think that our Bishops would be better advised to take notice of these words than busy themselves with framing rules for reducing the salaries of curates, or for preventing their early marriage. In the same chapter, speaking of the necessity of selection in the matter of reading, Dr. Knight observes:

> 'Many men fail because they attempt too much, and others learn nothing thoroughly because they will not confine themselves to any one subject.'

This is excellent advice. We could wish that these Pastoral lectures had not been quite so all-embracing. No one will question their thoroughness, or the competence of the writer: at the same time we feel that there is more here than the mind of the ordinand can bear. Their very thoroughness deprives them of that note of appeal and urgency which we find for example in *The Human Parson*. We do, however, strongly recommend the book to those who have been in orders for a few years.

R. McKay.

ISRAEL AND EGYPT*

We know that during all periods of the history of Israel there was close contact with Egypt. This is clear from the Old Testament records themselves, and is being shown more clearly every day by discoveries now being made in Palestine. Notwithstanding this, it has been and still is the practice to belittle the influence of ancient Egyptian civilisation upon the Old Testament beliefs, narratives, and modes of expression. A large measure of Babylonian influence upon some of the narratives cannot be denied, though in certain ways the contact was not so close and constant. There is not the same temptation to deny it, since it fits in well with the situation created by the Babylonian Exile, and with the view, now widely prevalent, that a large part, and in fact the larger part, of classical Hebrew literature was written or put together after this event.

The investigation of the relationship between Hebrew and Egyptian thought and literature can hardly be said to have been treated hitherto very seriously. The Assyriologist is usually a good Hebraist as well. The Egyptologist, on the other hand, usually seems to think that he has little or no use for Hebrew. The Hebraist again as a rule seems to think that he has little or no use for Egyptology. In other words, speaking generally, the Egyptologist neglects Hebrew, and the Hebraist neglects Egyptology. The investigation in question, therefore, if it is to make any progress, calls for the close co-operation or collaboration of Eygptologists and Hebraists, or for the emergence of some scholars who combine a good knowledge of Egyptian with a good knowledge of Hebrew.

In a book recently published, an English edition of a work published in German, the author claims to be qualified in this way to advance the investigation. Nor can it be denied that he has in this and in other ways exceptional endowments. Dr. Yahuda is a great linguist. He knows Egyptian. He knows Hebrew, not only as a literary, but also as a spoken language. He is known to be a good Arabist. He is familiar with German, English, and also, there is reason to believe, with Spanish. He shows further a wide acquaintance with the literature, ancient and modern, relating to his subject. All this indicates that his book merits careful study.

Dr. Yahuda explains that he approaches the whole problem of the Pentateuch from the linguistic side. After studying all the languages with which Hebrew has any relationship, he came to the conclusion that Egyptian exercised considerable influence on the formation and development of Hebrew as a literary language. This is primarily what he seeks to prove in the present volume, which is only the first of several comprehensive works. But the treatment does not stop short at the language, and it is this fact that gives to Dr. Yahuda's work an interest and importance for students whose studies are not merely linguistic. Such students will derive

* *The Language of the Pentateuch in its Relation to Egyptian*. By A. S. Yahuda. With a Hieroglyphic Appendix. Vol. I. (Oxford University Press; London, Humphrey Milford: 1933. pp. xxxviii, 327. 25/- net.)

benefit from his digressions, as he calls them, and may think them more valuable than his obsessions, if we may be permitted to use the term. As regards these he writes as follows:

> 'Such digressions may enable us in many cases to discover the meaning and origin of certain ideas and conceptions, or to reveal the technique of various crafts and the deviation of their terminology. It is clear that a literary language, unlike a mere spoken dialect, must reflect the entire and intellectual equipment of those for whom it is written. We propose, therefore, to go still a step further, and through the investigation of the language, enter into the discussion of questions connected with the spiritual and material life described in the Pentateuch in conjunction with the Egyptian world of thought, such as religious conceptions and institutions, ritual prescriptions, laws and injunctions, manners and customs, crafts and professions, and similar questions of importance.'

At a time when the Old Testament studies are suffering on the whole from stagnation, it is refreshing to meet with a work which is marked by real originality. For, whatever may be thought of many of Dr. Yahuda's linguistic parallels—and some of them will certainly be felt to be strained and fanciful—his work as a whole presents many new points of view and will stimulate inquiry. Those who are interested in the spread of culture and in the development of religious beliefs will find much to repay a study of the book. The treatment of the Genesis stories of primeval times is particularly arresting. Take, for instance, the story of the Flood. The Biblical narrative, according to Dr. Yahuda, is a striking example of the transformation of Babylonian stories by the grafting on to them of Egyptian elements. The word for 'ark' of course has long been recognised as Egyptian. The Babylonian story will have been taken over at an early date and have received afterwards an Egyptian colouring. The story as we have it in the Old Testament presents difficulty, because the Flood is described both as an inundation and as a torrential rainfall. This may be explained by supposing that in the description of it as an inundation of the earth caused by the bursting forth of the 'fountains of the great deep' and at the same time as a strong down-pouring rain coming from the 'openings of heaven' two elements are combined, of which one belongs to the Babylonian and the other to the Egyptian flood-story. This is interesting. But some of us will think the view more probable that the original story was an Egyptian inundation-story and that this was transformed afterwards by the introduction of elements from a Babylonian deluge-story. What evidence is there that the Israelites were influenced by Babylonian culture before the period between the Exodus and the Exile? No doubt many of the Old Testament narratives were written, though in a somewhat different form, much earlier than many of our Old Testament critics believe. The survival of so much early literature, some of it of a rather similar character, from neighbouring countries strongly suggests this. But Dr. Yahuda seems to be taking us too far back. Anyhow, this remarkable book should find many appreciative readers.

MAURICE A. CANNEY.

INTERCOMMUNION*

This book is an attempt to state and defend the Anglo-Catholic attitude towards Intercommunion. Its conclusions may be stated in its author's

* *Intercommunion: A Theological Study of Christian Unity.* By Fr. A. G. Hebert, M.A., S.S.M. (S.P.C.K.: 1932. pp. 128. 2/- net.)

words: 'If then we Anglo-Catholics are united, as we are, in disliking Intercommunion, the reason is not obscurantism, nor indifference about Reunion; on the contrary, it is because we fear that the spread of Intercommunion would be a disaster to the reunion movement, and would delay, perhaps for a long time, the real union that we want; that is to say, unity in Christ's Kingdom, expressed in the sacramental order of the visible Church' (p. 110). The theory of the Church, outlined with great care and clarity by Fr. Hebert, compels its holders to believe that Intercommunion cannot be a means to an end, since the Eucharist is a symbol of the unity of the Church, not an instrument for the creation of that unity. (If, as the Gospel records seem to suggest, Jesus instituted the Eucharist as a means to unity when the disciples were quarrelling, one might reasonably have expected that the Anglo-Catholic deviation from the principle of the Founder of the Service called for some explanation.) The Eucharist overcomes distinctions of race or of class (p. 64), but not those of denominational loyalties.

While disagreeing with almost all the arguments which support Fr. Hebert's doctrine of the Church, we can confidently recommend the book as a singularly frank and lucid statement of the point of view of the more intelligent members of the Anglo-Catholic party. Many things attract us in the book, such as the appeal for 'an intelligent adaptation of the old (liturgical) usages to suit modern needs' (p. 115), the dissatisfaction with non-communicating attendance at the Eucharist (pp. 66 and 116), the admission that 'our Christianity' has become too 'churchy' (p. 117) or that the 'mumbling of the service' is indefensible (p. 118). These confessions are reassuring. But most attractive of all is our author's acknowledgement of his debt to Protestants and his sincere tribute to the reality of their religion (p. 119). It is not often we find Anglo-Catholics doing what liberal Churchmen are often scolded for, *i.e.*, recognising the merits of Free Churchmen while despising those of other parties in their own Church. Fr. Hebert 'loves' the Free Churchmen, but his unkind remarks about Modernists (especially his bitter sneer at Bishop Barnes on p. 33) show that he recognises in Anglican Modernism a protagonist whom he dare not love!

But Fr. Hebert's presentation of his theme is, with certain lapses, broad-minded, sympathetic and full of insight: it is impossible to do justice to his arguments within the limits of a short review. Those interested in the matter should certainly read the book for themselves, for it is very instructive. Nor can we mention here all the arguments against Fr. Hebert's position. We will therefore let our author himself supply the supreme criticism of his own argument—a criticism which he makes unconsciously and with engaging naïveté. Arguing forcefully that Anglo-Catholics who think that Protestantism is merely negative should 'go and see' for themselves, he says: 'We cannot learn much of the life of the people who live next door by inspecting their garden from over the fence, or even by prying in at the windows. Conversations over the fence are very interesting, but they do not take us very far. If we are invited in to a formal dinner party, we see the family on its best behaviour. We only really get to know the life of the family when we are on such terms with them that we can drop in any evening of the week for a chat' (p. 119). The moral would seem to be that complete intimacy with Free Churchmen is better even than occasional acts of Intercommunion! Can we not discern in this passage Fr. Hebert's native common sense reasserting itself against his practice of throwing scholarly dust into his own eyes, in order that he may not see his precarious foothold on the slippery steps of ecclesiastical controversy?

ALAN RICHARDSON.

THE DEMON OF THE ABSOLUTE*

In the first of his *New Shelburne Essays* Mr. Paul Elmer More deals with an evil spirit which he calls the Demon of the Absolute. There are many demons which, having escaped from the gates of hell, now plague human society—the Moloch of violence, the Beelzebub of treachery, the Belial of lying flatteries, the Mammon of gold, the Mephistopheles of scepticism. But in its way more dangerous than any of these is 'one demon who retains so much of celestial glamour, who so wears the robe of authority that he still moves about unnoticed or passes for an angel of light.' It is this alluring spirit which is the Demon of the Absolute. 'It has wrought havoc in religion by presenting to faith the alternative between an absolute omnipotent God or no God at all, and between an infallible church or undisciplined individualism.' In nature, Mr. More holds, there are no absolutes. They are but 'phantoms created by reason itself in its own likeness, delusions which, when once evoked, usurp the field of reality and bring endless confusion in their train. Their close is chaos, in which Anarchy rules supreme.'

In his latest book, *The Catholic Faith,** a book which he describes as complementary to the series of four volumes published under the general title *The Greek Tradition,* Mr. More traces the ravages ascribable to the activity of the Demon of the Absolute within the sphere of religion and more particularly within the realm of Christian theology. He is a robust Dualist, and holds that true religion is necessarily based on a dualism between this world and the other world, between mind and Platonic Ideas, between good and evil. It was because the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation is essentially dualistic that the Church was justified in her uncompromising opposition to the Docetic heresy.

But, as Mr. More has pointed out in an earlier volume, *Christ the Word,* the growing tendency to replace monotheism by spiritual monism led to the infiltration into theology of a new docetism of the Father according to which the feelings attributed to God, as, for example, in the teaching of Jesus, could only be ascribed to Him by a kind of economy, God in reality being without motion or emotion of any sort.

> 'Unfortunately, while the Church vigorously repudiated docetism in regard to the Son, it was seduced by the glamour of science falsely so called into dealing leniently with the same error touching the Father. And still more unfortunately, the rationalism of the Middle Ages sanctioned the error as a dogma of the orthodox creed for later times. As Baron von Hügel expresses it: "Aristotle's conception of God's Unmoving Energy is taken over by St. Thomas in the form of God being One *Actus Purus*"; and from that scholastic megalomania of the infinite we have never recovered the lost ground of common sense.'

If the Demon of the Absolute be the villain of the piece, it is hardly too much to say that Mr. More regards Aristotle as his High Priest. It is from him that 'the transcendental inanites' of Neoplatonism derive, while the injury inflicted on mediaeval Catholicism by a corrupt following of Aristotle is a central thesis of *The Catholic Faith.*

Mr. More begins the book with a section on Buddhism and Christianity. His examination of Buddhism is sympathetic and illuminating; but in the end he falls back on the protest of Plato :—

**The Catholic Faith.* By Paul Elmer More. (Published by the Princeton University Press. Price 24/-.)

> 'And, O heavens, can we ever be made to believe that motion and life and soul and mind are not present with perfect being? Can we imagine that being is devoid of life and mind, and exists in awful unmeaningness an everlasting fixture?'

Then follows a section on the Creeds. It deals at considerable length with the Apostles' Creed, and pleads for 'a sliding scale in the matter of belief.' What Mr. More has to say about the nature of belief will not only be of interest to the student, but also should prove of the highest value to the layman who is in difficulties about the use of the Creed. On the central point of the Incarnation he professes a carefully guarded *Binetarianism,* and in this he thinks that he is in substantial agreement with a theologian so orthodox as Professor Goudge. He rejects 'a petrified trinitarian dogma,' while welcoming the admission of a trinitarian formula in worship.

Though writing as an Anglo-Catholic, in the section on the Eucharist Mr. More criticises mediaeval sacramental dogma with refreshing vigour. The doctrine of Transubstantiation rests, in his opinion, on a jejune misunderstanding of Aristotle.

> 'Whatever may be said of that elusive phantom of the Aristotelian metaphysic (misnamed God), posited as a final cause abstracted from all active causation and as a pure substance devoid of all attributes, in the veritable world of Aristotle there can be no substance except as the subject for accidence and no accidence without subject; in other words it would be sheer nonsense from the Aristotelian point of view, to speak of a Socrates without Socratic attributes and activities, or of Socratic attributes and activities unattached to a Socrates. But this precisely is what the doctrine of categories suffered at the hands of the mediaeval theologians, when, to explain the mystery of the Eucharist, they argued that the sacramental body was a subject without attributes and that the attributes of the bread and wine persisted though without subject . . . It is not too much to say that the mediaeval theory of transubstantiation is Aristotle turned topsy-turvy and metaphysics gone mad.'

To Mr. More Scholasticism is not an escape from but a disguise of the raw credulity of the Dark Ages.

It is the lure of absolutism which leads to the equally untenable positions of Biblical Fundamentalism and Papal or Ecclesiastical Infallibility. On the face of it, it is impossible for any reasonable man to regard the Bible as inerrant; and, if it be once admitted that there may be error and inconsistency in the *depositum fidei* it is nothing less than absurd to suggest that the Church, which is secondary to the Bible, is infallible. That Rome realises this clearly enough is shown by her intolerance of even the most moderate modernists.

> 'There is no escape from the rocks of Scylla and Charybdis save by sailing resolutely between them, by insisting, that is to say, on the possibility, even the probability, of a kind of revelation which neither in book nor in Church is absolute, but in both book and Church possesses a sufficient authority.'

Mr. More regards Newman's defection from the Church of England as the typical religious tragedy of the nineteenth century. His courage failed him and in his desire for the perfect light he bowed down to the Demon of the Absolute.

But it is in the form of Mysticism that the Demon of the Absolute penetrates most deeply into the very heart of religion. Mr. More devotes a third of his book to a careful and acute analysis of the elements which go to make

up mysticism. This section has been published by the S.P.C.K. as a separate volume, at the price of five shillings. He distinguishes between three planes of mysticism. First there is the sense of the reality of the supernatural and the illusiveness of the phenomenal world. This, the Platonic type of mysticism, is a *sine qua non* to all religion, and does not necessarily lead to full mysticism. Then comes that sense of immediate contact with the supernatural which Mr. More designates quasi-mysticism. Finally we get the complete or essential mysticism which is nothing less than the absorption of the soul in the ultimate supernatural reality. Mr. More points out that this essential mysticism is 'something quite different from the genteel presentation of it by popular expounders who mingle the three planes without discrimination, and then sentimentalize the mixture.' An example of this kind of misleading exposition he finds in Miss Underhill's writings. His own analysis of essential mysticism, as exhibited, for example, in the writings of St. John of the Cross, is searching and methodical. His conclusion is that this type of real mysticism is a disease of religion and that it denudes the existent world of all meaning and purpose.

> 'As for the Christian, let him not suppose that a humility content to abide within the limits of traditional orthodoxy with no passion for the immediate vision of God, and to restrain the ambitions of his intellect within the circle of Platonic Idealism, is a lowering of his religious or philosophical courage. Rather let him be assured that in this voluntary inhibition lies the act of heroic faith and noblest endeavour. To believe seriously in the otherworld of God and Ideas, to lift the mind habitually to the contemplation of supernatural realities until it learns of a certainty that its home is there, to live in that realm wholeheartedly, yet without shirking or denying the claims of nature, to centre the distracted will upon God as the King of righteousness, to see in this maze of gliding phenomena, or to know without seeing, the obscured presence of veritable justice and beauty, to retain faith in a divine purpose at work within the world despite all the persuasions of infinite illusion, to take one's part valiantly in the eternal conflict of truth—that is not a light choice or a feeble task. Against the temptation to sink below this mediatorial plane we have, to him who listens, a clear call of the spirit; the ambition to rise, here and now, into what allures us as a higher plane is equally a temptation, however it be disguised.'

G. L. H. Harvey.

ENIGMA: VARIATIONS ON ORTHODOXY*

The coming centenary of the Oxford Movement is producing a mass of literature, of which these books are fair examples. All are written from the standpoint of the centenary, and thus have as their object a tribute to the Tractarian movement. This much they have in common, although we may be permitted to express a doubt as to the possibility of agreement between

* *The Oxford Movement in Scotland.* By W. Perry, D.D. (Cambridge University Press. 3/6.)

Credo, or A New Tract for the Times. By Rev. Desmond Morse Boycott. The Keble Books. (Skeffington. 3/6 each.)

The Joy of Discipleship. By Rev. H. J. Carpenter. The Keble Books. (Skeffington. 3/6 each.)

The Church and the World. By Bishop Welldon. The Keble Books. (Skeffington. 3/6 each.)

Oxford Movement Centenary Tractates: The Church of England and the Holy See. (1) 'What do the Celtic Churches say?' By Rev. Silas Harris. (2) 'What does the Anglo-Saxon Church say?' By Rev. J. G. Morton Howard. (Talbot & Co. 1/- each.)

Bishop Welldon and the authors of *The Oxford Movement Centenary Tractates*. Dr. Welldon reminds us in some ways of a rather up-to-date edition of a Laudian Divine; the authors of the Tractates of the poorer type of Roman Catholic apologists.

The most important of these books is that by Dr. Perry, the Dean of Edinburgh, whose works on the Scottish Episcopalian Church are well known. Dr. Perry tells the story of the Oxford Movement in a manner which is at once readable, pleasant, and highly inaccurate. For example, he does not think it necessary to mention that the *Tracts for the Times* ceased publication at the express request of the Bishop of Oxford, or that it was when Newman became convinced that the Church of England is analogous to Donatism that he joined the Church of Rome. He has no hesitation in dating the Movement from Keble's Assize sermon in July, 1833, overlooking the fact that this sermon was mentioned by no contemporary writer and was only called into prominence by Newman in his *Apologia* some thirty years later. Dr. Hook of Leeds receives a passing mention, but Dr. Perry does not call attention to Dr. Hook's strong protest against the ritualism of Pusey's nominee at St. Saviour's, Leeds. He continues his story by recounting the fortunes of the Movement in Scotland, and he is able to throw some light on this little-known bypath, but we should have thought that the brother of Bishop Forbes, a great liturgiologist and scholar, would have received more than a passing mention. It will interest readers of *The Modern Churchman* to know that Dr. Perry considers it a matter of congratulation that The Modern Churchmen's Union is unrepresented in Scotland. And this from the land of Robertson Smith and A. B. Bruce! Since this book has a laudatory preface by the Primus of the Scottish Church, one gathers that he too shares in Dr. Perry's self-congratulations.

The purpose of the Keble Books is apparently to teach that type of orthodoxy which would have gladdened the heart of John Keble. In this, Mr. Morse-Boycott both succeeds and fails. He provides a series of semi-devotional thoughts for every Sunday in the Christian Year, designed both for 'the wayfaring man' and 'the educated Christian,' in which, however, everything which does not appeal to the brand of Anglo-Catholicism peculiar to Mr. Morse-Boycott is ruthlessly condemned. We are treated to tirades against contraception, in which all the evidence adduced by medical science, by eugenics, and by sociology, is calmly ignored; divorce is repudiated; the author of *Simon Called Peter* attacked; and so on. The Empty Tomb is asserted as the basis of belief in the Resurrection and all counter-theories disproved in a couple of pages. The whole book is written in the style of cheap journalism which, we would suggest, does not befit the subjects with which Mr. Morse-Boycott deals. Mr. Carpenter, on the other hand, in chapters devoted to various aspects of the relations of God and man, has set forth what is essentially the Tractarian position in a style of quiet dignity eloquent of the ideal of holiness exhibited to the disciple of Christ by Catholic Christianity. Dr. Welldon discusses the relationship of the Church to many of the problems of the day. Whilst we are unable to agree with all the conclusions reached yet many a parish priest, lacking time for much reading and in need of new ideas, will gain help from these last two books.

The Centenary Tractates emanate, we gather, from a small group of extreme Anglo-Catholic clergy, whose interest is reunion with the Church of Rome and whose object is to show the ultimate dependence of the Church of England on that of Rome. When we compare the list of authors of forthcoming Tractates with the list of signatures to a certain recent Manifesto

we have no hesitation in saying that here is a common inspiration. It is not unjust to say of this band of authors that they were previously quite unknown to fame, and of the two Tractates which we have read, that the authors are probably more competent as parish priests than as ecclesiastical historians. Mr. Harris commences his pamphlet with quotations from Origin and Tertullian, giving incorrect references in each case. He then goes on to sketch the position of the Papacy, assigning a position to the Papal Legates at the Council of Ephesus which few modern scholars would give them. Needless to say, the difficult relationship between the Celtic bishops and Augustine is carefully glossed over and a highly partisan view taken of what facts are adduced. Mr. Morton Howard writes in much the same way and, about Dunstan and Wilfrid, adopts an interpretation of the facts, which, whilst favouring his thesis, is scarcely borne out by careful study. We much prefer works of this kind when they are written with that ability which Roman Catholic controversialists are wont to employ; the vice of amateur historians is that where they take a special view they neither provoke thought nor entertain.

One can only hope that the Oxford Movement Centenary will produce some works of lasting value; and cease to flower in inaccurate and controversial brochures.

F. H. Amphlett Micklewright.

SEX EDUCATION*

This little volume of a hundred pages contains four lectures by Sir J. A. Thomson, Professor Winifred Cullis, Dr. Elizabeth Sloan Chesser, and Dr. H. Crichton Miller. The four lectures are written from quite different points of view, and are all in their way stimulating and helpful.

Sir J. A. Thomson, after describing the difficulties which modern society puts in the way of adolescents, makes a strong plea for what he calls indirect methods of sex-instruction. We should help children to a healthy outlook on sex by filling their minds with pictures of courtship and pairing in all their charm and heroism. The love-song of the birds, the beauty of the flowers, the stories of noble love which illuminate the pages of history and romance; these should make up the positive part of our teaching. On the other hand, we should avoid any suggestion that sex is a subject for joking, which spoils the high dignity of courtship and love.

Professor Winifred Cullis gives an admirably clear and concise description of the physiology of the sex process. She shows how at puberty two kinds of cells are developed in the reproductive organs, 'first those which guard and develop the sex cells, . . . and secondly, others quite distinct from those that become the reproductive cells, which are necessary to maintain and develop the individual.' From this she concludes that it is quite wrong to suppose that some sexual indulgence is necessary for health. This is a valuable point. Professor Cullis proceeds to attack the view, now fortunately less common than it was, that women are by nature subject to ill-health.

Dr. Elizabeth Sloan Chesser's lecture is less happy than the two preceding essays in lacking a clear focal point. She is dealing with the failure of educators and parents to apply the modern teachings about the 'science and art of good living.' This is a large topic. The lecture touches upon food, athleticism, temperamental difficulties, stupid parents, unsuitable

* *Sex Education and the Parent.* (Gollancz: 1932. 2/6.)

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occupations, love and marriage, discipline, clothing, manual work, and kindred problems. Sensible advice is given, but the treatment is so brief that it would convey little to anyone not already well read in the psychology of education.

Dr. Crichton Miller deals with man's control of his instinctive impulses. This carries him on to speak of dysgenic marriages and birth control. His lecture ends with a discussion of the problem of the Peter Pans of life, who never grow up, but remain fixed in a childish and weakly dependent attitude. As an antidote to this tendency he advocates the preaching of an evolutionary Gospel. The ambition of parents should be to produce better children than they themselves were, and then to make these children in love with growing up. It may be suggested that both these ambitions are quite common among parents, but that the difficulty lies not in getting the end accepted, but in chosing the right means to the end. At least as many failures in education are made by parents who think to give their children a better chance than they themselves had by indulging them and sheltering them, as by parents who selfishly sacrifice their children to their own comforts.

Slight as they are, these little lectures raise some most important questions in a simple and attractive form. They would make excellent material for group discussions. A good bibliography is appended.

R. J. STANFORD.

THE RE-INTERPRETATION OF JESUS*

The Re-Interpretation of Jesus in the New Testament, by Dr. Carl Everett Purinton, Professor of Religion in Adelphi College, Long Island, is a useful introductory book to New Testament studies. It is suitable for those who have previously made no detailed study of the subject and who know no Greek. It makes no original contribution to New Testament study. It endeavours to show how Jesus is revealed in the New Testament: the first section examines the sources of our knowledge of Jesus; the second describes his life and teaching; while the third and last section deals with the interpretation of Jesus in the later books of the New Testament. Professor Purinton selects for this purpose the Acts, Revelation, Hebrews, the Letters of John and the Fourth Gospel. The amazing thing is that a book dealing with the re-interpretation of Jesus in the New Testament should entirely pass over the writings of Paul! If Dr. Purinton can say, 'The importance of this (*i.e.*, the Fourth) Gospel in the transition of Christianity to the Graeco-Roman world can hardly be over-estimated' (p. 178), we may surely add that the importance of Paul in this connexion should certainly not be under-estimated.

Apart from this conspicuous omission (which our author has, of course, noticed: he apologises for it on p. 13) Dr. Purinton has done his work well. The style is easy and attractive (although on this side of the Atlantic we do not like 'filia' and 'upostasis' as transliterations of the Greek); the salient facts are clearly brought out in an easily assimilated form; there is a wealth of interesting quotations and illustrations; and the author speaks about the Holy Land with the authority of one who knows it at first hand. Dr. Purinton stands as 'middleman' between the scholar and the ordinary reader.

**The Re-Interpretation of Jesus in the New Testament* By Carl E. Purinton. (Charles Scribner's Sons. 218 pp. 7/6 net.)

The tone is modernist throughout: here are some of our author's views in his own words:—

> 'While it is important to recognise that these narratives (*i.e.*, the birth narratives of Matthew and Luke) should not be considered as literal history, they do help us to gain an understanding of the impression made by Jesus upon his followers' (p. 54). 'The presence of a legendary element in miracle may be admitted, without denying the possibility of a basis of fact' (p. 89). 'It is no longer possible to think in terms of a physical resurrection. The literal reading of the story of Jesus' death and resurrection and ascension depends upon an outworn theory of the universe' (p. 149).

Dr. Purinton does not think that the Apostle John is responsible for any of the works in the New Testament which have been attributed to him. This kind of outspoken instruction, based on true reverence and sound scholarship, is the type of teaching which is so much needed to-day.

ALAN RICHARDSON.

CORRESPONDENCE

CROSS-BEARING WITH CHRIST.

SIR,

I have read your article with great interest—'Cross-Bearing with Christ.' The ethical burden you assert is true enough (p. 675), and one would like you to have added the burden of witness to the divinity of Jesus. It was offence against their blasphemy law from the Jewish point of view that made Him deserving of the death sentence. However the phrase 'the divinity of Jesus' be understood, that estimate of His status is the core of Christianity.

Perhaps this explanation would not be amiss to account for the escape of the disciples from their joining Jesus in Crucifixion, that they laid no claims to identification with God as Divine Personality in Human Life.

GEOFFREY B. LOWE, M.R.C.S.

Dera House,
Hastings Road, Bexhill-on-Sea.
March 19th, 1933.

Of course we are in entire agreement with Dr. Lowe that the Messianic claim of Jesus was a very important factor in bringing about His crucifixion. This we thought was clearly stated when in summing up the main characteristics of the teaching of Jesus we said: 'And last but not least, Jesus Himself the Christ of God' (p. 670).

But the point we wished to stress especially in the sermon is that expressed in the words: 'Jesus was not executed because He was the Christ, but because of the kind of Christ He was' (p. 673), and the contrast between the reception which Judaism gave to the Messianic claim of Barcochba and to the Messianic claim of Jesus provides a suggestive illustration of this statement.

We do not think, however, that contemporary Judaism did regard the Messianic claim, as, to use Dr. Lowe's phrase, 'identification with God.' That is a later theological development which we find stressed in the Fourth Gospel. Technically the charge on which Jesus was condemned to death by the Sanhedrin was that He claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One. Had St. Peter and the other Apostles had the courage on that first Good Friday, publicly to assert the Messianic claim of Jesus, we have no doubt that they would have been crucified with Him.

ED., *M.C.*

MODERNISM AND ITS FUTURE.

SIR,

Having read with great interest, in the last two issues of the *Modern Churchman*, the Rev. A. Darby's articles on 'Modernism and its Future,' it is borne in upon me more forcibly than ever, that the goal of Modern Churchmanship must be the equations of Goodness and Truth. Surely only this can lead to what must be the ultimate aim—a Universal Religion for Mankind. Christ preached the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, and prayed the Father to give us a Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, to abide with us for ever and to guide us into all truth. We have gradually advanced along the line of Brotherhood, and are advancing, in spite of war and dogmatism, the more rapidly and surely as easier communication is overleaping the barriers of distance, and so promoting the intercourse indispensible to the full realization of Brotherhood. 'Far is the time, remote from human sight when such realization shall be attained, but may we not make considerable strides towards it by adding what, in this twentieth century, should be our fuller contribution to the labours of former pioneers, even as we seek to share their vision, and with them to follow the gleam?'

MARY C. DAWES.

Surbiton.
March, 1933.

THE REVISED CATECHISM.

SIR,

May I be allowed to add my tribute to the courage, initiative and ability of those responsible for 'A Revised Catechism' as published in your December issue.

It will be a relief to teachers of all grades that many of the archaisms of the Prayer Book version have been carefully removed, and the emphasis placed upon the progressive element in religion is a welcome change.

For my part I would they had gone even further, and substituted a simplified version of the Creed, more comprehensible to the child-mind. By so doing they would have given recognition to the view so widely held amongst educated and reflective people, who at the same time are professing and practising Christians, that the Creeds are 'witnesses to the historical continuity of spiritual development in man,' rather than infallible and unalterable statements of belief. Perhaps such a substitution will be possible if and when the Archbishops' Standing Committee, wisely suggested by your February correspondent C. B. Russell, has produced an authoritative revision.

Meanwhile, I suggest, the singular pronoun before the Creed is preferable to that employed by the revisers. There may be good reasons for the change, but religion after all is a personal matter, and the singular pronoun is both more direct and more in keeping with the composition as a whole.

'Borrowdale,' Howard Road,
S. Yardley, Birmingham.
March 4th, 1933.

HEADMASTER.